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258.

# DIME NOVELS



## THE WHITE BRAVE.

BEADLE AND COMPANY, 98 WILLIAM STREET

YONKERS

New-England News Co., Box



# A SPLENDID STORY,

BY THE

**Author of "Antelope Abe."**

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# THE WHITE BRAVE;

OR,

THE FLOWER OF THE LENAPE LODGE.

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BY CAPTAIN MURRAY.

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# THE WHITE BRAVE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### AN ADVENTURE IN THE WOODS.

It was a bright morning in April, in the year 1799; the robin was beginning his early song, the woodpecker darted his beak against the rough bark, and the squirrel hopped merrily from bough to bough among the gigantic trees of the forest, as two hunters followed a winding path which led to a ferry across the Muskingum river.

One was a powerful, athletic young man, with a countenance strikingly handsome, and embrowned by exercise and exposure; his dress was a hunting-shirt, and leggings of deer-skin; his curling brown locks escaped from under a cap of wolf-skin; and his moccasins, firmly secured round the ankle, were made from the tough hide of a bear: he carried in his hand a short rifle of heavy caliber, and an ornamented *couteau-de-chasse* hung at his belt. His companion, lower in stature, but broad, sinewy, and weather-beaten, seemed to be some fifteen or twenty years the elder; his dress was of the same material, but more soiled and worn; his rifle was longer and heavier; and his whole appearance that of a man to whom all inclemencies of season were indifferent, all the dangers and hardships of a Western hunter's life familiar; but the most remarkable part of his equipment was an enormous ax, the handle studded with nails, and the head firmly riveted with iron hoops.

"Well, Master Reginald," said the latter, "we must hope to find old Michael and his ferry-boat at the Passage des Rochers, for the river is much swollen, and we might not easily swim it with dry powder."

"What reason have you to doubt old Michael's being found at his post?" said Reginald; "we have often crossed there, and have seldom found him absent."



"True, master; but he has of late become very lazy; and he prefers sitting by his fire, and exchanging a bottle of fire-water with a strolling Ingian for half a dozen good skins, to tugging a great flat-bottomed boat across the Muskingum during the March floods."

"Baptiste," said the young man, "it grieves me to see the reckless avidity with which spirits are sought by the Indians: and the violence, outrage, and misery, which is the general consequence of their dram-drinking."

"Why you see, there is something very good in a cup of West Ingy rum." Here Baptiste's hard features were twisted into a grin, irresistibly comic, and he proceeded: "It warms the stomach and the heart; and the savages, when they once taste it, suck at a bottle by instinct, as natural as a six-weeks' cub at his dam. I often wonder, Master Reginald why you spoil that fine *eau-de-vie* which little Perrot puts into your hunting-flask, by mixing with it a quantity of water! In my last trip to the mountains, where I was first guide and turpret,\* they gave me a taste now and then, and I never found it do me harm; but the nature of an Ingian is different, you know."

"Well, Baptiste," said Reginald, smiling at his follower's defense of his favorite beverage, "I will say that I never knew you to take more than you could carry; but your head is as strong as your back, and you sometimes prove the strength of both."

The conversation was suddenly interrupted by the report of Reginald's rifle, and a gray squirrel fell from the top of a hickory, where he was feasting in fancied security. Baptiste took up the little animal, and having examined it attentively, shook his head gravely, saying, "Master Reginald, there is not a quicker eye nor a truer hand in the territory, but—"

As he hesitated to finish the sentence, Reginald added, laughing, "But—but—I am an obstinate fellow, because I will not exchange my favorite German rifle, with its heavy bullet, for a long Virginia barrel, with a ball like a pea; is it not so, Baptiste?"

The guide's natural good-humor struggled with prejudices which on this subject, had been more than once wounded by his young companion, as he replied: "Why, Master Reginald,

\* *Anglice*, "Interpreter."



the deer, whose saddle is on my shoulder, found my pea hard enough to swallow; and look here, at this poor little vermint, whom you have just killed—there is a hole in his neck big enough to let the life out of a grisly bear; you have hit him nearly an inch further back than I taught you to aim before you went across the great water, and learnt all kinds of British and German notions!”

Reginald smiled at the hunter's characteristic reproof, and replied, in a tone of kindness: “Well, Baptiste, all that I do know of tracking a deer, or lining a bee, or of bringing down one of these little vermint, I learn first from you; and if I am a promising pupil, the credit is due to Baptiste, the best hunter in forest or prairie!”

A glow of pleasure passed over the guide's sunburnt countenance; and grasping in his hard and horny fingers his young master's hand, he said:

“Thank'ee, Master Reginald; and as for me, though I'm only a poor *coureur des bois*,\* I ain't afeard to back my pupil against any man that walks, from Dan Boone, of Kentucky, to Bloody-hand, the great war-chief of the Cayugas.”

As he spoke, they came in sight of the river, and the blue smoke curling up among the trees showed our travelers that they had not missed their path to Michael's log-house and ferry.

“What have we here?” exclaimed Baptiste, catching his companion by the arm; “'tis even as I told you: the old rogue is smoking his pipe over a glass of brandy in his kitchen corner: and there is a wild-looking Indian pulling himself across with three horses in that crazy bateau, almost as old and useless as its owner!”

“He will scarcely reach the opposite bank,” said Reginald; “the river is muddy and swollen with melted snow, and his horses seem disposed to be unquiet passengers.”

They had now approached near enough to enable them to distinguish the features of the Indian in the boat; the guide scanned them with evident surprise and interest; the result of which was, a noise which broke from him, something between a grunt and a whistle, as he muttered:

\* “*Coureur des bois*,” an appellation often given to the Canadian and half-breed woodsmen.



“What can have brought *him* here?”

“Do you know that fine-looking fellow, then?” inquired Reginald.

“Know him, Master Reginald!—does ‘Wolf know Miss Lucy?’—does a bear know a bee-tree? I should know him among a thousand red-skins, though he were twice as well disguised. *Tête-blue*, master! look at those wild brutes how they struggle; he and they will taste Muskingum water before long.”

While he was speaking one of the horses reared, another kicked furiously, the shallow flat-boat was upset, and both they and the Indian fell headlong into the river. They had been secured together by a “laryette,” or thong of hide, which unfortunately came athwart the Indian’s shoulder, and thus he was held below the water, while the struggles of the frightened animals rendered it impossible for him to extricate himself.

“He is entangled in the laryette,” said the guide; “nothing can save him,” he added, in a grave and sadder tone. “’Tis a noble youth, and I would have wished him a braver death! What are you doing, Master Reginald?—are you mad? No man can swim in that torrent. For your father’s sake—”

But his entreaties and attempts to restrain his impetuous companion were fruitless, for Reginald had already thrown on the ground his leathern hunting-shirt, his rifle and ammunition; and shaking off the grasp of the guide as if the latter had been a child, he plunged into the river, and swam to the spot where the feebler struggles of the horses showed that they were now almost at the mercy of the current. When he reached them, Reginald dived below the nearest, and dividing the laryette with two or three successful strokes of his knife, brought the exhausted Indian to the surface. For a moment he feared that he had come too late; but, on inhaling a breath of air, the red-skin seemed to regain both consciousness and strength, and was able in his turn to assist Reginald, who had received, when under water, a blow on the head from the horse’s hoof, the blood flowing fast from the wound. Short but expressive was the greeting exchanged as they struck out for the bank, which one of the horses had



already gained; another was bruised, battered and tossed about among some shelving rocks lower down the river; and the third was being fast hurried toward the same dangerous spot, when the Indian, uttering a shrill cry, turned and swam toward this, his favorite horse, and by a great exertion of skill and strength, brought it to a part of the river where the current was less rapid, and thence led it safely ashore.

These events had passed in less time than their narration has occupied; and the whole biped and quadruped party now stood drenched and dripping on the bank. The two young men gazed at each other in silence, with looks of mingled interest and admiration; indeed, if a sculptor had desired to place together two different specimens of youthful manhood, in which symmetry and strength were to be gracefully united, he could scarcely have selected two finer models—in height they might be about equal—and though the frame and muscular proportions of Reginald were more powerful, there was a roundness and compact knitting of the joints, and a sinewy suppleness in the limbs of his new acquaintance, such as he thought he had never seen equaled in statuary or in life. The Indian's gaze was so fixed and piercing, that Reginald's eye wandered more than once from his countenance to the belt, where his war-club was still suspended by a thong, the scalp-knife in his sheath, and near it a scalp, evidently that of a white man, and bearing the appearance of having been recently taken.

With a slight shudder of disgust, he raised his eyes again to the chiseled features of the noble-looking being before him, and felt assured that, though they might be those of a savage warrior, they could not be those of a lurking assassin. The Indian now moved a step forward, and taking Reginald's hand, placed it upon his own heart, saying, distinctly, in English:

“My brother!”

Reginald understood and appreciated this simple expression of gratitude and friendship; he imitated his new friend's action, and evinced, both by his looks and the kindly tones of his voice, the interest which, to his own surprise, the Indian had awakened in his breast.

At this juncture they were joined by the guide, who had



paddled himself across in a canoe that he found at the ferry, which was two hundred yards above the spot where they now stood. At his approach, the young Indian resumed his silent attitude of repose; while, apparently unconscious of his presence, Baptiste poured upon his favorite a mingled torrent of reproofs and congratulations.

“Why, Master Reginald, did the mad spirit possess you to jump into the Muskingum, and dive like an otter, where the water was swift and dark as the Niagara rapids! *Pardee*, though, it was bravely done! another minute, and our red-skin friend would have been in the hunting-grounds of his forefathers! Give me your hand, master; I love you better than ever! I had a mind to take a duck myself after ye; but thought, if bad luck came, I might serve ye better with the canoe.” While rapidly uttering these broken sentences, he handed to Reginald the hunting-shirt, rifle and other things, which he had brought over in the canoe, and wrung the water out of his cap, being all the time in a state of ill-dissembled excitement. This done, he turned to the young Indian, who was standing aside, silent and motionless. The guide scanned his features with a searching look, and then muttered audibly, “I knew it must be he.”

A gleam shot from the dark eye of the Indian, proving that he heard and understood the phrase, but not a word escaped his lips.

Reginald, unable to repress his curiosity, exclaimed, “Must be who, Baptiste? Who is my Indian friend—my brother?”

A lurking smile played round the mouth of the guide, as he said in a low tone to the Indian: “Does the paint on my brother’s face tell a tale? Is his path in the night? Must his name dwell between shut lips?”

To this last question the Indian, moving forward with that peculiar grace and innate dignity which characterized all his movements, replied: “The War-Eagle hides his name from none; his cry is heard from far, and his path is straight; a dog’s scalp is at his belt!” Here he paused a moment, and added, in a softened tone: “But the bad Spirit prevailed; the waters were too strong for him; the swimming-warrior’s knife came; and again the War-Eagle saw the light.”

“And found a brother—is it not so?” added Reginald



"It is so!" replied the Indian; and there was a depth of pathos in the tone of his voice as he spoke, which convinced Reginald that those words came from the heart.

"There were three horses with you in the bac," said the guide; "two are under yonder trees—where is the third?"

"Dead, among those rocks below the rapids," answered War-Eagle, quietly. "He was a fool, and was taken from a fool, and both are now together;" as he spoke, he pointed scornfully to the scalp which hung at his belt.

Reginald and Baptiste interchanged looks of uneasy curiosity, and then directing their eyes toward the distant spot indicated by the Indian, they distinguished the battered carcass of the animal, partly hid by the water, and partly resting against the rock, which prevented it from floating down with the current.

The party now turned toward the horses among the trees; which, after enjoying themselves by rolling in the grass, were feeding, apparently unconscious of their double misdemeanor, in having first upset the bac, and then nearly drowned their master by their struggles in the water. As Reginald and his two companions approached, an involuntary exclamation of admiration burst from him.

"Heavens, Baptiste! did you ever see so magnificent a creature as that with the laryette round his neck? And what a color! it seems between chestnut and black! Look at his short, wild head, his broad forehead, his bold eye, and that long, silky mane falling below his shoulder! Look, also, at his short back and legs! Why, he has the beauty of a barb, joined to the strength of an English hunter!"

Our hero (for so we must denominate Reginald Brandon) approached to handle and caress the horse; but the latter, with erect ears and expanded nostrils, snorted an indignant refusal of these civilities, and trotted off, tossing high his mane as if in defiance of man's dominion. At this moment the War-Eagle uttered a shrill, peculiar cry, when immediately the obedient horse came to his side, rubbing his head against his master's shoulder, and courting those caresses which he had so lately and so scornfully refused from Reginald.

While the docile and intelligent animal thus stood beside him, a ray of light sparkled in the Indian's eye, as with rapid



utterance, not unmingled with gesticulation, he said, "The War-Eagle's path was toward the evening sun; his tomahawk drank the Camanchee's blood; the wild horse was swift, and strong and fierce; the cunning man on the evening prairie said he was *Nekimi*,\*—'the Great Spirit's angry breath'; but the War-Eagle's neck-bullet struck—"

At this part of the narrative, the guide, carried away by the enthusiasm of the scene described, ejaculated, in the Delaware tongue, "That was bravely done!"

For a moment the young Indian paused; and then, with increased rapidity and vehemence, told in his own language how he had captured and subdued the horse, which faithful creature, seemingly anxious to bear witness to the truth of his master's tale, still sought and returned his caresses. The Indian, however, was not thereby deterred from the purpose which had already made his eye flash with pleasure. Taking the thong in his hand, and placing it in that of Reginald, he said, resuming the English tongue; "The War-Eagle gives *Nekimi* to his brother. The white warrior may hunt the mastoche,† he may overtake his enemies, he may fly from the prairie-fire when the wind is strong; *Nekimi* never tires!"

Reginald was so surprised at this unexpected offer, that he felt much embarrassed, and hesitated whether he ought not to decline the gift. Baptiste saw a cloud gathering on the Indian's brow, and said in a low voice to his master, in French: "You must take the horse; a refusal would mortally offend him." Our hero accordingly accompanied his expression of thanks with every demonstration of satisfaction and affection. Again War-Eagle's face brightened with pleasure; but the effect upon *Nekimi* seemed to be very different, for he stoutly resisted his new master's attempts at approach or acquaintance; snorting and backing at every step made by Reginald in advance.

"The white warrior must learn to speak to *Nekimi*," said the Indian quietly; and he again repeated the short, shrill cry before noticed. In vain our hero tried to imitate the sound; the horse's ears remained deaf to his voice, and it seemed as if his new acquisition could prove but of little service to him.

\* *Nekimi* is the Delaware for thunder.

† In the Delaware language, this expression was applicable to any large, swift animal, as it is given to the elk, the buffalo, etc.



War-Eagle now took Reginald aside, and smeared his hands with some grease taken from a small bladder in his girdle, and on his extending them again toward the horse, much of the fear and dislike evinced by the latter disappeared. As soon as the animal would permit Reginald to touch it, the Indian desired him to hold its nostril firmly in his hand, and placing his face by the horse's head, to look up steadily into his eye for several minutes, speaking low at intervals to accustom it to his voice: he assured him that in a few days Nekimi would through this treatment become docile and obedient.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A DEAD TRAITOR.

THE other horse being now secured, the party prepared to resume their journey; and as it appeared, after a few words whispered between the Indian and the guide, that their routes were in the same direction, they struck into the forest, Baptiste leading, followed by Reginald, and War-Eagle bringing up the rear with two horses.

After walking a few minutes in silence, "Baptiste," said our hero, in French, "what was the story told about the horse? I understood little of what he said in English, and none of what he spoke in his own tongue."

"He told us, Master Reginald, that he was out on a war-party against the Comanches, a wild tribe of Indians in the South-west: they steal horses from the Mexicans, and exchange them with the Aricaras, Kioways, Pawnees, and other Missouri Indians."

"Well, Baptiste, how did he take this swift horse with his 'neck-bullet,' as he called it?"

"That, Master Reginald, is the most difficult shot in the prairie; and I have known few red skins up to it. The western hunters call it 'creasing'—a ball must be shot just on the upper edge of the spine where it enters the horse's neck; if it is exactly done, the horse falls immediately, and is secured;



then the wound is afterward healed; but if the ball strikes an inch lower, the spine is missed or the horse is killed. Few red skins can do it," muttered the guide; "and the 'Doctor' here," shaking his long rifle, "has failed me more than once; but War-Eagle has said it, and there are no lies in *his* mouth."

"Tell me, Baptiste," said Reginald, earnestly—"tell me something about my brother's history, his race, and exploits."

"Afterward, my young master. I know not that he understands us now; but these Indians are curious critters in hearing; I believe if you spoke that strange Dutch lingo which you learnt across the water, the red-skin would answer you—stay," added he, putting his rifle to his shoulder, "here is work for the Doctor."

Reginald looked in the direction of the piece, but saw nothing; and the guide, while taking his aim, still muttered to himself, "The pills are very small, but they work somewhat sharp." Pausing a moment, he drew the trigger; and a sudden bound from under a brake, at fifty yards' distance, was the last death-spring of the unlucky deer whose lair had not escaped the hunter's practiced eye.

"Bravely shot," shouted Reginald; "what says the War-Eagle?"

"Good," replied the Indian.

"Nay," said Baptiste, "there was not much in the shot; but your French waly-de-sham might have walked past those bushes without noting the twinkle of that critter's eye. Our red skin friend saw it, I warrant you," added he, inquiringly.

"War-Eagle's path is not on the deer-track," said the young chief, with a stern gravity.

In a very few minutes an additional load of venison was across the sturdy shoulders of the guide, and the party resumed their march in silence.

They had not proceeded far when the Indian halted, saying, "War-Eagle's camp is near; will my white brother eat and smoke?—the sun is high: he can then return to his great wigwam."

Reginald, who was anxious to see more of his new friend, and in whom the morning's exercise had awakened a strong relish for a slice of broiled venison, assented at once, and desired him to lead the way.



As he was still followed by the two horses, War-Eagle was somewhat in advance of his companions, and Baptiste whispered in French, "Beware, Master Reginald—you may fall into a trap."

"For shame," said the latter, coloring with indignation; "can you suspect treachery in *him*? Did you not yourself say he could not lie?"

"Your reproof is undeserved," said the cool and wary hunter; "War-Eagle may not be alone, there may be turkey-buzzards with him."

"If there be a score of vultures," said Reginald, "I will follow him without fear—he would not lead us into harm."

"Perhaps you are right," was the guide's answer; and again the party resumed their march in silence.

They soon arrived at a place where the forest was less densely wooded; some of the larger trees appeared to have been overthrown by a hurricane, and some of the lesser to have fallen by the ax. Nekimi trotted forward, as if making for a spot that he recognized, and the Indian recalled him with the same cry he had before used, adding, however, another and a shriller sound.

Meantime the Indian walked composedly forward until he reached the camp—a pretty spot, sheltered on the windward side by a laurel thicket, and on the other commanding a view of the open glade, and of a small stream winding its silent course toward the river, which our party had so lately left.

On a grassy plot, between two venerable trees, the embers of a smoldering fire sent up the thin blue vapor which rises from the burning of green wood, several logs of which were still piled for fuel; while sundry bones and feathers, scattered at no great distance, gave sufficient evidence of recent feasting.

War-Eagle glanced hastily around his camp; and leaving Nekimi to feed at liberty, secured the less tractable horse; while he was thus employed, the guide whispered in a low voice:

"There are three or four Indians here! I trace their marks on the grass, and I know it by this fire; it is a war-party—there are no squaws here; Master Reginald, keep your



ears and eyes open, but show no distrust ; if he offers a pipe, all may yet be right."

Although the guide said this so distinctly that Reginald heard every syllable, he was to all appearance busily engaged in throwing some dry sticks on the fire, and easing himself of the skins and the venison with which he was loaded. The Indian now took from a hollow in one of the old trees before mentioned, a pipe, the bowl of which was of red sandstone, and the stick painted and ornamented with stained porcupine-quills ; he also drew out a leather bag of *kinne-kinck* ;\* and having filled and lighted his pipe, seated himself at a short distance from the fire, and gravely invited Reginald to sit on his right, and the guide on his left. As soon as they were seated, War-Eagle inhaled a large volume of smoke ; and looking reverently up to the sky, sent forth a long whiff as an offering to the Great Spirit ; then simply saying : " My brother is welcome," he passed the pipe to Reginald, and afterward to Baptiste.

For some time they smoked in silence ; not a sound was heard but the crackling of the wood on the fire, and the occasional chirrup of a robin in the neighboring bushes. This silent system not suiting Reginald's ardent temperament, he abruptly addressed the Indian, as follows :

" Has my brother come far from his people ?"

A cloud gathered on the chief's brow, and the guide thought that a storm of wrath would be excited by this unlucky question ; but the Indian, looking steadily upon the frank open countenance of the speaker, replied, in a voice rather melancholy than fierce :

" War-Eagle has few people : the bones of his fathers are *not far !*"

Our hero, anxious to dismiss a subject which seemed painful to his new friend, turned the conversation to his equipment, and observed :

" My brother walks abroad without fear ; he is almost without arms."

The Indian, carelessly resting his hand upon his war-club,

\* *Kinne-kinck* is a mixture made by the Indians from the inner bark of the willow pounded small, tobacco, and the dried leaves of the sumach. The flavor of this composition is by no means disagreeable. The word itself is Delaware ; but the mixture is in common use among many tribes.



said—speaking rather to himself than to his companion—  
 “It has tasted blood; ask the Dacotahs!”

“The Dacotahs are dogs,” said the guide, angrily. “Their skins are red, but their hearts are white!”

War-Eagle turning upon him a penetrating look, continued  
 “Grand-Hache is a warrior; he has smoked, has fought  
 among the *Lenapé*; \* he has struck more than one Dacotah  
 chief. But the Grande-Hache can not rest: the scalp of his  
 mother hangs in the lodge of the *Assiniboins*; † her spirit is  
 unquiet in the dark hunting-ground.”

The guide made no reply, but the forced compression of  
 his lips, and the muscular contraction that passed over his  
 sinewy frame, showed how deeply he cherished that ven-  
 geance which the Indian's words awakened.

“This is then,” said our hero, to himself, “the cause of  
 that fierce, unextinguishable hate which Baptiste has always  
 borne to these Sioux; I can not wonder at it.” Reginald con-  
 tinued, however, his conversation respecting his new friend's  
 equipment, in the same tone: “My brother's war-club is  
 strong, and that iron spike in its head is sharp; but the rifle  
 kills from far, and the white men are not all friends to  
 him.”

“War-Eagle has ears and eyes: he can see snakes in the  
 grass,” was the calm reply.

“Nay, but my brother is careless,” said Reginald, laugh-  
 ing; “Grande-Hache, as you call him, and I are two men,  
 strong and armed with rifles; if we were not his brothers, the  
 War-eagle would be in danger.”

“The bad Spirit made the thick water and the horses too  
 strong for War-Eagle,” said the latter, referring to the morn-  
 ing's accident, “but he could not be hurt by his brother's  
 rifle.”

“And why so?” demanded Reginald.

“Because,” said the Indian, “the white warrior has smoked,  
 has taken his brother's gift, and the Great Spirit has written  
 on his face that he can not speak lies.”

“You are right, my brave friend,” said Reginald—not a

\* The Delawares call themselves Lenni-Lenape: “the ancient or original  
 people.”

† *Assiniboins*—the “stone-heaters”—a powerful and warlike branch of  
 the great Dacotah or Sioux nation.



little gratified by the untutored compliment—"but if you fall in with white men who carry rifles, and who *do* speak lie—how fares it with you then?"

"War-Eagle is always ready," said he, in the same unmoved tone; "the Grande-Hache is a great warrior—my brother will take many scalps; yet *if* their tongues were forked—*if* their hearts were bad—both would die where they now sit—they have neither ears nor eyes—but the Lenapé is a chief; they are as safe here as in the great white village."

Though inwardly nettled at this taunt, which he felt to be not altogether undeserved, the guide took no other notice of it than to strain to the utmost those organs of sight and hearing which the red-skin had held so cheap—but in vain: the forest around them seemed wrapped in solitude and silence; the eyes of Reginald, however, served him better on this occasion. "By heaven, the Indian speaks truth," said he; "I see them plainly—one, two, three! and we, Baptiste, are at their mercy."

This he spoke in French, and the guide answered in the same language: "Do you see Indians, Master Reginald, where I can see naught but trees, and logs, and grass? If it is so—I am an owl, and no hunter!"

"Glance your eye," said our hero, calmly, "to yon fallen log, that lies fifty or sixty yards to your right; there are three small parallel lines visible there—they are three gun-barrels; the sun shone on them a minute since, and their muzzles are directed full upon us."

"It is true; your eyes are younger than mine, I suppose," said the guide, apparently more disconcerted at that circumstance than at the imminent peril of their situation; he added, in a low, determined tone, "but they must shoot very true, if they wish to prevent me from taking this deep and deceitful villain with me on the long journey."

During the whole of this conversation, War-Eagle sat in unmoved silence, occasionally puffing out a whiff from the fragrant herb in his pipe. Reginald met the unexpected danger with the straightforward, daring courage, which was the characteristic of his mind; Baptiste with the cool resolution which was the result of a life of stratagems, perils and escapes.



“War-Eagle,” said the former, “you speak true; Grande Hache and I have shut our eyes and ears; but they are now open; I see your warriors.”

The Indian turned his searching eye full upon the speaker; he met a look bold, open, fearless as his own. “Where can my white brother see warriors?” he inquired.

“Their guns are across yonder log,” said Reginald; “and their muzzles are pointed here.”

“It is so,” said War Eagle; “the red-men are on the war-path; they seek blood; is my white brother not afraid?”

“War-Eagle is a chief,” replied the young man; “he cannot lie—he has said that his white brother is as safe as in the wigwam of his father!”

Again the Indian bent a scrutinizing look upon the countenance of the speaker, and again met the same smile of fearless confidence. With more emotion than he had yet shown, he said: “The Great Spirit has given to my white brother the big heart of a Lenapé!”

He now made a signal to his ambuscade to come forth, on which they started up from behind the large fallen tree which had hitherto screened them, and advanced slowly toward the camp. They were three in number; two of them active-looking men, of moderate stature, but of symmetrical proportions; the third a lad, apparently about seventeen years old; the faces of the two former were painted with black stripes, which gave them an appearance at once fierce and grotesque; they were lightly clad in hunting-shirts, leggins and moccasins, all of elk-skin, and each carried a tomahawk, scalp-knife and the gun before mentioned; the young lad carried no other weapon but the gun; his hunting-shirt was fancifully ornamented with tassels of porcupine-quills, and was fastened at the waist by a belt studded with parti-colored beads; his leggins were fringed, and his moccasins were also braided with the quills of the porcupine; in figure he was slight and tall; as he drew near, Reginald thought his countenance even more remarkable than that of War Eagle: indeed its beauty would have been almost effeminate, had it not been for the raven blackness of the hair, and the piercing fire of the dark eyes. The three came forward in silence, the lad



being rather in advance of the others, and stood before the War-Eagle.

He bade them, in his own language to be seated, and smoke the pipe with the white men. They did so, with the exception of the lad, who not being yet a warrior, passed it untouched; and when it had gone round, War-Eagle harangued his party; as he narrated the events of the morning, Reginald was struck by the deep and flexible modulation of his voice; and although he did not understand a word of the language, fancied that he knew when the chief related his immersion and subsequent rescue by the white man's knife.

At this portion of the tale, the Indian youth made no attempt to conceal his emotion; his glistening eyes were fixed upon the speaker, and every feature of his intelligent countenance beamed with affectionate interest: as War-Eagle described his being struck under water, stunned by a blow from a horse's foot, and that the thick water covered him, a hurried exclamation escaped from the boy's lips; and when his chief related how the white warrior had dived, had cut the cord in which he was entangled, and had brought him again to the air and to life, the youth, no longer able to control his feelings, threw himself into Reginald's arms, exclaiming, in good English:

"The Great Spirit reward the white warrior; he has given me back my chief—my brother!"

Our hero was no less astonished than was the guide, at such uncontrolled emotion in a youth of a nation so early taught to conceal their feelings; nor were they less surprised at the clearness and purity of accent with which he expressed himself in English.

"I only did, my boy," said Reginald, kindly, "what you would have done had you been in my place."

"You are a great warrior," said the youth, running his eye over the powerful frame beside him: "Wingenund would have gone into the strong river, and would have died with the War-Eagle."

"Is Wingenund, then, your name, my brave boy?"

"It was my father's name," said the youth, proudly. "I have yet no name: but War-Eagle says I may have one soon, and I will have no other."



"I feel sure you will deserve your forefather's name," said Reginald. "What does it mean in my language?"

"It means, 'The Beloved.'"

"The youth speaks true," murmured the guide, (who, though busily engaged in rounding off a bullet with his knife, lost not a word or gesture that passed)—"he speaks only truth. I knew his forefather well; a braver and better heart never dwelt among the Lenapé."

The boy looked gratefully at the weatherbeaten hunter; and as he cast his eyes down in silence, it would have been difficult to say whether pleasure, pride, or pain predominated in their expression.

"Tell me," resumed Reginald, "how you come to speak English like a white man?"

"The good father and Olitipa taught me."

Reginald looked at the guide for an explanation; that worthy personage shook his head, saying: "The boy talks riddles; but they are not hard to guess. The good father must be some missionary or priest; and Olitipa would, in their tongue, signify 'pretty forest fowl;' so it is probably the name of a Delaware woman—perhaps his sister."

"*Kehalla lá*—so it is," said the boy. "Olitipa is, in your tongue, 'pretty forest-bird;' and she is my sister."

"Where is Forest-bird?" inquired Reginald, amused at the youth's *naivete*.

"Far, far away, beyond the great river! But we will go back soon—shall we not?" inquired he, looking up timidly at War-Eagle.

"*Pekha lenitti*,"\* answered the chief; and, leaning toward the youth, he added some words in a whisper, which made him start up to obey the orders he had received.

Reginald was not long left in ignorance of their nature, as in a few minutes the active lad had refreshed the fire, and was busy in broiling some venison steaks, which, after the exercise of the morning, sent up a steam far from unpleasant to the senses of any of those present.

"Master Reginald," said the guide, "that silly perroquet of yours, Gustave Perrot, is always telling fine stories of what he has seen in Europe, and talking of the scent of roses and

\* "By-and-by," or "soon."



the sweet sounds of music, till the girls in the clearin's think he's a book-author and a poet. Did you ever smell any scent or hear any music sweeter than comes from the hissing and frizzing of those slices of fat venison, after a six hours' hunt in the woods?"

"Perhaps not," said Reginald, laughing; "but we are only hunters, and Monsieur Perrot is a man of taste."

"Whom have we here?" grumbled the guide, as an Indian appeared in the distance. "Friend War-Eagle, is this another of your band?"

"He is," replied the chief. "All are now here."

The new-comer was a powerful man: his face was painted, one-half black, and the other half striped with bars of red; the sleeves of his hunting-shirt were so short and loose, that his naked arms were visible, one of which was tattooed in the form of a lizard, and on the other he wore an armlet of brass; his leggins and moccasins were soiled and torn; and the perspiration streaming from his matted hair showed that he had traveled both far and fast. He was, like the rest, equipped with rifle, tomahawk, and scalp-knife: his countenance, as far as it could be distinguished through its disguise of paint, was expressive of cunning and ferocity. Though probably much surprised at seeing two white men sitting thus amicably with his chief, he took little notice of them, but, without asking or being asked any questions, seated himself on the opposite side of the fire, lighted his pipe, and smoked.

"Master Reginald," said the guide, in French, "I do not like that fellow. I know not how he comes to be with our friend here, for he belongs to another tribe. I have seen him before."

Meantime the industrious lad had broiled the venison steaks; and, having gathered some broad leaves, which served on this occasion for plates, he brought the first slice to Reginald, the second to Baptiste, the next to War-Eagle, and so on, until he went through the party; after which, without tasting any thing himself, he took his station close to his chief and to his new friend. During the meal the Indian last arrived talked much in a suppressed voice to the one next to him, and seemed studiously to avert his eyes from his chief and the two white men.



"Tarhé," said War-Eagle, addressing him, "is there not *tassmanane*\* for the stranger? He is my brother; and his path has been long."

Tarhé went to his *cache*, a spot not far distant, and taking out two or three small cakes, brought them around behind his chief, and offered one to our hero, who was in the act of receiving it, when the miscreant, drawing the knife from his girdle, aimed a blow at the back of the unsuspecting Reginald.

Nothing could have saved him from instant death, had not the gallant boy thrown himself between the savage and his victim. The knife went through his arm; and so deadly was the force by which it was guided, that it still descended, and inflicted a slight scratch on Reginald's shoulder.

War-Eagle sprung like a tiger from the ground, and with one blow of his tremendous war-club dashed the ruffian to the earth; then turning suddenly his angry glance upon the two other Indians, he asked if they had any part in Tarhé's plot. Neither had stirred from their seat, and both declared they had known nothing of his intention. It was well for them that the chief believed them, for this act of vile treachery had aroused all the slumbering fire within him, and the veins started like blue cords upon his temples.

Reginald's first impulse, when he jumped upon his feet, was to hasten to the wounded youth, whose features were now lighted up by a smile of happiness.

"Tell me, my brave, generous boy, are you much hurt?"

"No," said he; "I should have been hurt if the War-Eagle's camp had been stained with the blood of his white brother."

The sturdy guide himself could not repress his admiration of this gallant boy's conduct, who now stood looking intently upon War-Eagle, his features animated by excitement and pride, and the knife still fixed up to the very handle in his arm.

"War-Eagle," said Baptiste, "the Lenapé are men—their boys are warriors. That dog is not a Lenapé," said he, pointing to the prostrate body of Tarhé.

\*Tas-man-ane: a kind of bread, made by the Delawares for long journeys. It is made of maize, powdered very fine, and sweetened with maple-sugar.



"*Tah-Delamattenos*,"\* said the chief, indignantly.

The youth now moving a step forward, came before his chief with an air of modest dignity, and slowly drew the reeking knife from his arm, while a stream of blood gushed from the wound ; not a muscle of his frame trembled, not a feature varied in its expression, as he said, in a voice of musical gentleness : " War-Eagle, will Wingenund allow his grandson now to bear his name ?"

" *Wingenund* !" said War-Eagle, looking upon him with affectionate pride, " the chiefs at the council fire shall know that the blood of the well-beloved still flows in a young warrior's veins."

" My good friend," said the guide to the chief, " you have no time to lose ; the lad will bleed to death !"

Reginald sprung forward, and closing as he best could the gaping wound, bound his handkerchief tightly over it.

There was, indeed, no time to be lost, for the blood had flowed more freely than his youthful frame could endure. A painful dizziness came over him ; and murmuring almost inaudibly : " The white warrior is safe, and Wingenund is happy," he fell senseless into Reginald's arms.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE TWO DELAWARES.

" I FEAR he will die !" said Reginald, in a tone of the deepest grief, as he stooped over the inanimate form of the wounded boy.

" Die !" said the War-Eagle, almost fiercely ; " yes, he will die ! but not by the bite of yonder serpent,"\* pointing to the body of the Wyandot ; " he will die when the Great Spirit orders it ; but before he dies the murderers of his father shall

\* "*Tah-Delamattenos*" — " No, he is a Wyandot." This tribe occupied the region to the north of Ohio, and the north-west of Pennsylvania ; they spoke a dialect of the Iroquois, and are better known by the name of Hurons ; they sometimes hunted with the Delaware, by whom they were designated as above.



hear his war-whoop ! His tomahawk shall be red in their blood ; their scalps shall hang at his belt ! *Then* Wingemund may go to his ancient people in the happy hunting-fields !”

“ My brother,” said Reginald, earnestly, and still supporting the insensible frame of Wingemund, “ do not lead this youth to shed the white man’s blood ! He can not call back those who are gone ! We have a Book which the Great Spirit gave to our forefathers ; it speaks His own words, and he tells us, ‘ Vengeance is mine ;’ and He also tells us that if we would please Him, we must forgive those who have injured us ; His arrows are very sharp ; His anger is fierce ; His justice is sure. Leave Him to punish those bad men, and teach the ‘ well-beloved ’ to be the white man’s friend.”

For a minute the chief seemed buried in deep thought ; then suddenly starting from his reverie, he spoke a few words in a low tone to one of his men, who instantly moved away, and disappeared in the forest.

War-Eagle then replied in a tone rather of melancholy than of reproof : “ The Great Spirit never speaks to the red-man in words ; if He is angry, He thunders ; if He is pleased, He sends rain and sunshine, to make the corn and fruits to grow, and sweet grass to fatten the deer. My brother says the Great Spirit has spoken plainly to the white man in words, and those words are painted in a book. War-Eagle believes it, because my brother’s tongue is not forked ; but he would ask—did the white men, who came in the night, like wolves to the couch of the fawn, who murdered the father, the kindred, the little sisters of Wingemund—did those men hear the Great Spirit’s words ?”

“ My brother,” said Reginald, “ there are among white men many wolves and serpents ; men whose hands are bloody and whose tongues are forked. The Great Spirit does not forbid to punish, or even to kill such men, in defense of ourselves, our wigwams, our children or our friends. He is not angry with War-Eagle for striking down that Wyandot whose hand was raised to shed his brother’s blood ; but when the grass of many seasons has grown over the graves of those who were injured, then the Great Spirit commands man to let his anger sleep, to bury his hatchet and to forgive.”

“ It may be so,” said War-Eagle, gravely ; “ the good fath-



er in the Western hunting-ground has said the same ; Olitipa, the Forest-Bird, whose voice is like the mocking-bird, and who speaks only truth, she has spoken the same ; but it is very dark, War-Eagle can not see it."

"Who is the Forest-Bird?" inquired Reginald, whose curiosity had been twice excited by the mention of this extraordinary name.

Before the chief could reply, the Indian, whom he had sent, returned with a mess made from several leaves, herbs and roots, which he had bruised and reduced to a kind of glutinous pulp. War-Eagle now took off the bandage from the youth's arm ; after examining it carefully, and applying some of the above mixture to both the orifices of the wound, he bound it again, more strongly and skillfully than before ; then taking him in his arms, as if he had been a little child, he carried him down to the rivulet ; and by dint of bathing his temples and rubbing forcibly his hands and feet, soon restored the suspended animation.

When he was recovered so far as to be able to speak, Reginald, sitting down by him, said a thousand kind things to him, such as were prompted by the gratitude of a generous heart.

While they were conversing, the guide drew near to the chief ; and pointing to the body of the Wyandot, which still lay where he had fallen, said :

"He is surely dead !"

"He is so," replied the other, gravely ; "when War-Eagle is angry he does not strike his enemy's forehead twice."

The guide now turned over the body ; and seeing that the iron point of the war-club had entered just above the eyes, and had sunk deep into the brain, he knew that instant death must have ensued. The chief calling the two Indians, desired them to bury the body where it would be safe from wolves and buzzards. "But," he added, sternly, "let not the spot be marked for his kindred ; he died like a dog, and none should lament him."

As they turned away to execute these orders, the guide observed to the chief : "That Wyandot has not been long with the War-Eagle."

"True—but how does the Grande-Hache know it?"



"His eye has been on him more than once ; Grande-Hache sees, but he can hold his tongue."

Baptiste, diverting the conversation to another topic, said : "It is singular that War-Eagle, on a war-path far from his village, should have only strangers with him, excepting the youth who is wounded."

"What means the Grande-Hache?"

"He means," replied the guide, "that the other two, now gone to bury the Wyandot, are *Southern men*\*—they are not Lenapé."

"Grande-Hache has ears and eyes open—how can he know that he speaks truth?" said the chief.

"Because he *has* eyes and ears," replied the guide. "Does War-Eagle think that Grande-Hache has hunted twenty years among the red nations, and knows not yet the moccasin and tongue of a Shawanon? I knew them at a glance," added he, with a shrewd smile, "as well as I knew the War-Eagle in the bateau, though both he and they have put on their faces the paint of the *Mengwe*."†

"Grande-Hache speaks truth," replied the chief, dryly, without showing the surprise and annoyance that he felt at the penetration of the guide. "The men are Shawanons, they hunt with the Lenapé, beyond the great river—they are brothers."

So saying, he broke off the conversation, and turning toward Wingenund, saw that he was talking as earnestly and freely with Reginald as if they had been long intimate ; while he contemplated this friendly intercourse with a smile of satisfaction, the guide felt himself called upon to remind his companion that the sun was getting low, that they had yet some miles to walk, and that the colonel would be anxious and impatient.

"True," said Reginald, springing up, "I must take leave of my brother, and of my young preserver ; but we shall meet again ; we will hunt together, and be friends."

\* Southern men—in the Delaware language, *Cha-oua-no* or *Shawano*—known as "Shawnees." This powerful tribe were generally in alliance with the Lenapé, and inhabited the country on their western frontier. About the time of our tale they were very numerous on the banks of the Wabash river.

† *Mengwe* or *Mingoes*—the Delaware name for those Indians who resided chiefly in the Northern States of the Union, and who are better known as the "Iroquois."



"Let it be so," said the lad, with an ardor which he cared not to conceal; "and Wingenund will tell Forest-Bird that the white warrior who drew War-Eagle from the deep water will come to see her, and she will thank him."

While the Boy was speaking, the chief turned away, and busied himself in fastening a thong halter firmly to the head of Nekimi, whom he again led to his new master.

Reginald now undid from his waist the silver-buckled belt with the *couteau-de-chasse* which it supported, and buckling it round the youth, he said: "Wingenund must wear this, and must not forget his white friend."

The boy's eyes sparkled with pleasure, as he received this gift; but he was still too weak to stand, and he only murmured, in a low voice: "Wingenund will not forget."

The chief now taking the guide aside, said to him, in his own language: "How is my white brother called?"

"I call him 'Master Reginald.'"

After one or two ludicrous attempts at an imitation, War-Eagle shook his head, saying: "It is not good—may his Lenapé friend call him 'Netis'" (the friend)?

As soon as Reginald was informed of what had passed, and of the meaning of his own name, he accepted it with pleasure, and Wingenund repeated it again and again as our hero bid him farewell.

War-Eagle insisted upon accompanying him, and leading Nekimi through the forest, until they reached the broad-wheel track which passed Colonel Brandon's house, and thence led through other clearings to the village of Marietta. As they went along, Reginald desired Baptiste in a whisper to talk with the chief, and endeavor to draw from him what article of dress, ornament or use, he would most value, as he was anxious to make his Indian brother a present; and the guide by skilfully maneuvering his conversation, soon learnt that War-Eagle had, on his last excursion, lost his rifle, and that he was also short of ammunition. They now emerged from the forest upon the great road, if it might be so called, leading to Marietta; and the Indian putting the halter of Nekimi into Reginald's hand, said that he would return to his camp. Our hero, taking him by the hand, said, "Netis wishes to see his brother at this spot to-morrow at noon."



"War-Eagle will come," was the brief reply; and shaking both the white men cordially by the hand, he turned and disappeared among the trees.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### WAR-EAGLE.

THE day following that on which the events related in the preceding pages occurred, there was an assemblage more than usually numerous, gathered in and around the capacious store of David Muir, in Marietta: immediately in front of his door was a small party, who, from their bearing and appearance, might be easily recognized as leading persons in the little community. In the midst of them was a roughly-dressed country lad, whose haggard appearance indicated wretchedness, or fatigue, or both; near the group stood his horse, reeking with sweat, and showing that the messenger, for such he was, had not spared the spurs on the road. Many and eager were the questions put to him; and the countenances of his auditors evinced no ordinary degree of interest in his replies; several women, and a dozen or two of boys and girls, made repeated endeavors to penetrate into this important circle; and having contrived to overhear a disjointed word, here and there, such as "Indian," "scalped," "rifle," etc., they slunk away, one by one, to spread it abroad through the village, that a neighboring settlement had been attacked by a large body of Indians, armed with rifles and tomahawks; and that every man, woman, and child, excepting this messenger, who had escaped, was scalped!

We will, however, introduce the reader into the center of the above-mentioned group, and detail to him the substance of the news which created so much excitement.

It appears that on the preceding day, two brothers, named Hervey, were riding homeward, after attending a marriage, at a small settlement twenty miles to the northward of Marietta; they were not above half a mile in advance of several other men, also returning from the marriage; both were armed with rifles, having been shooting at a target for a wager,



when on a sudden, a single Indian, uttering a loud war-whoop, sprung from a thicket by the road, and at one stroke of his war-club felled the elder brother to the earth; before the second could come up to his assistance, the same Indian aimed a sweeping blow at his head with the butt-end of his rifle; the younger Hervey warded the blow also with his rifle, but it fell with such force that both barrels were broken off from the stocks: with the rapidity of lightning, the Indian struck him heavily on the head, and he fell stunned from his horse. A few minutes afterward, he recovered, and found some of his friends standing over him; his unfortunate brother lay dead and scalped at his side; his horse and the Indian had disappeared. Several young men dashed off immediately in pursuit, and tracked the hoofs successfully until the fugitive had entered the hard and stony bed of a rivulet falling into the Muskingum; hence all further search proved unsuccessful, and they returned dispirited to their companions.

It was long since so daring an outrage had been committed in the territory; seldom was it that the red-skins would attack white men in open day, unless they were greatly superior in numbers; but for a single Indian to fall upon two armed whites, killing one and leaving the other for dead, almost within call of his friends, was an instance of audacity to which the oldest hunter could scarcely remember a parallel; it was evident also that the savage had been aware of a party of whites being at hand, otherwise he would certainly have shot one brother before he attacked the other; but, avoiding the discharge of his rifle, he had effected his purpose with a war-club.

Another striking circumstance was the clear evidence afforded that the killing of the elder Hervey was an act of personal revenge; because the younger brother when knocked from his horse had fallen helpless at the Indian's feet; and the latter, purposely to show that he had spared his life and scalp, had struck a knife through the lappet of his coat into the ground, with force enough to bury it up to the haft. Four or five of the best hunters had recommenced the pursuit; and although they once struck the trail of a man on foot evidently running from them, they were again baffled by the river, and returned to the settlement.



Such was the sum of the messenger's intelligence which caused, as can easily be imagined, no little sensation in Mariotta and the neighboring districts.

"I know some of the worst of them red-skin devils," said a bulky young man, whose countenance betrayed violent passions and strong symptoms of free indulgence in David Muir's "fire-water;" "tell me what was this Indian like?—how did Dick Hervey describe him?"

"He hadn't over much time to look at him," said the messenger, "afore he was sent to sleep; but he says he was a very tall, powerful chap, streaked over the face with black."

"Was he a young 'un or an old 'un?"

"A young 'un, and active as a deer, or he couldn't have knocked those two Herveys off their critturs, as a man knocks off a corncob with an ash plant."

"I wish I had him here," said the young giant, shutting a hand as heavy and large as a shoulder of mutton. "I'd give him a real Kentucky hug."

None of the bystanders seemed able to guess who the perpetrator of this bold outrage might be. It was resolved, however, to take all possible measures for his discovery; a meeting of the principal inhabitants was convened, a description of the Indian's person, and of the marks by which Hervey's horse might be recognized, was written, and several copies thereof made, and forwarded to the nearest posts and ferries; at the same time a reward of a hundred dollars was offered to any person who should discover the offender, and a hundred more for his seizure, dead or alive.

We must now return to Reginald, who, on the morning of this same day, rose with the sun; and feeling himself nothing the worse for his slight wounds, or for his diving adventure, sallied forth to see how Baptiste had provided for Nekim's safety and comfort. All means having failed to enter him into a stable, the hunter had secured him firmly to an oak, casting down for him abundance both of food and litter. Reginald approached him, holding in his hand some bread, and having given the sharp, shrill cry (which to his sister Lucy's great alarm he had practiced more than once in the house), he was agreeably surprised to perceive that the horse recognized it, and seemed less averse to his caresses. Having fed



him, and carefully observed all the rules laid down by War-Eagle for gaining his affections, he returned to the house, and began to collect the various articles which he proposed to give to his Indian brother; among these were a good Kentucky rifle, and a hand-some buckhorn knife for the chief; he selected also a light fowling-piece, which he had used as a boy, and which he intended for Wingenund; to these he added several pounds of powder and a due proportion of lead; he also threw into the package a few beads and a large cornelian ring, which had been long the occupant of his dressing-case.

When he had collected all these together he gave them to Baptiste, desiring him to be ready to accompany him to the rendezvous after breakfast; and having finished his preparations, he knocked at the door of Lucy's room, to inquire whether she was ready to preside at the morning meal.

"Come in, Reginald," she said; "if I am rather late, it is your fault; for your adventures of yesterday have driven sleep from my pillow; and even when I did fall asleep I dreamt of nothing but your Indian hero."

"Say you so, faithless one?" replied Reginald; "I shall tell that to—"

"Hush now, Reginald," said the blushing girl, putting her little hand upon his mouth; "did you not promise me yesterday that you would not do so again?"

"Perhaps I did," said her brother; "and I will keep it if you will come down-stairs and give me a very good cup of coffee."

In the breakfast-room they were joined by the colonel and Aunt Mary; and while they discuss that most comfortable of family meals, we will give the reader a slight sketch of the family.

Colonel Brandon and his wife Lucy were both of English birth, but had come to Virginia to settle many years before the opening of our story, and indeed of the American Revolution. Colonel Brandon, after the close of the war, in which he had gained considerable distinction under Washington's command, moved his family to the then new and wild settlements on the banks of the Ohio. He was accompanied by his old and tried friend, Captain Edward Ethelston, of the



alister service—the navy—and both gentlemen took their families with them.

For many years every thing had prospered with them, the capital invested in their farms and stores doubling, quadrupling, till both had acquired handsome fortunes, and were looking forward to happiness and wealth in their old age, in the society of their children, of whom there were four altogether, Reginald and Lucy Brandon, and Edward and Evelyn Ethelston.

And then came a blow to both in the person of one, common enough in those days of strife, but which proved fatal to Ethelston. When absent from home with his son Edward, then about ten years old, on a trading voyage in one of the river schooners, the Indians of some unknown war-party burst into his farm, scalped every living creature of both sexes that they could find, and disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they had come. The only body that could not be found was that of the infant Evelyn, then about three or four years old, and it was conjectured that they had thrown it into the river.

From the day that he heard of that cruel slaughter Captain Ethelston had drooped and refused to be comforted. He died in less than a year after the event, leaving his son Edward to the guardianship of his old friend Colonel Brandon. Young Reginald Brandon and Edward Ethelston grew up to manhood in the closest companionship in consequence of this bereavement, and the orphan boy became, as it were, only another son of the Brandons.

As they grew up, Edward Ethelston developed a grave, serious character and a great love for the sea, which his guardian was luckily able to gratify. Colonel Brandon, besides his farm, had engaged to a considerable extent in trade and had three fine vessels, his own property, trading from New Orleans to the West Indies and Europe. At the time our story opens, Edward Ethelston was absent with one of these vessels on a trip to the West Indies, from whence he was momentarily expected now. What his relations were with sweet Lucy Brandon, the "Lily of Mooshanne," as she was called, we must leave the reader to find out for himself while we say a few words of Reginald Brandon.



Reginald at twenty-five was the beau ideal of a young hero—tall, powerful, handsome, and active as a cat in body, and possessing a mind stored with learning. A rich uncle in England had for a time hoped to draw him from the land of “those blasted Yankees” by promising to make him his heir, and Reginald’s father had sent him over to England on a visit, but the charm of wealth and allurements of pleasure had never caused Reginald’s love to wander from his native Mooshanne, and when he returned home from Europe, a few months before the opening of our tale, he had learned all that English schools and German universities could teach him, **remaining still a true blue American.**

The only trace of his foreign habits was a certain softness of *manner* in which it must be confessed that our people are somewhat deficient in general, spite of their far superior courtesy of heart; and—a French valet, Monsieur Gustave Perrot by name.

This individual the reader will hear more of as the story progresses. For the present, suffice it to say that Perrot was a marvel of ingenuity in every thing he undertook—a cook to shame Soyer, a valet who never stole, no coward although a man of commendable prudence, full of comicality and high spirits, and devotedly attached to Reginald, who had saved his life in Germany, when the hot-headed young American had served a short term as a volunteer in the Austrian forces operating against Moreau in the famous retreat through the **Black Forest.**

From that date the rescued prisoner Perrot had persisted in serving Reginald, in spite of the latter’s opposition at first, and had won his way wherever he came, by dint of simple good nature and fidelity till he had become a favorite even at Mooshanne among our practical Americans.

And so having done the necessary let us return to Mooshanne.

We left the family assembled at the breakfast-table, where the conversation still turned upon the adventures of the preceding day.

“Reginald,” said Lucy, “I should like to go with you to-day, to see your Indian brother, and that heroic boy.”

“I fear,” replied her brother, “it is further than you could



easily walk ; and, moreover, Wingenund will scarcely accompany his chief ; he must be still too weak from his wound."

"Nay, Reginald ; if the distance is the only difficulty, I can ride Snowdrop, and if Wingenund does come, I will reward him for his brave defense of my brother, by giving him some little trinket, which he may take back to his sister. You can not refuse me now," added she, in a coaxing tone, the power of which over her brother was all but despotic.

"Of course I can not, if you obtain Aunt Mary's and the colonel's permission," said Reginald, smiling.

Lucy met with no further opposition. Snowdrop was ordered to be saddled ; in a few minutes the happy girl was equipped, and provided with a coral necklace for the chief, and a pretty brooch, destined for her brother's preserver.

The party now assembled before the door, consisting of Reginald, Baptiste, and Lucy mounted on her favorite gray pony ; our hero slung his rifle across his shoulders ; the sturdy woodsman, besides carrying his own enormous ax, walked lightly under the two rifles and the other articles to be presented to the chief, and Wolf played around them his fantastic and unwieldy gambols.

Cheerful and smiling was the woodland scenery through which they passed ; the dew-drops still glittering in the beams of the morning sun, and the air was impregnated with the vernal fragrance arising from a thousand opening buds and blossoms.

"See, Lucy," said her brother, as he walked by her side, while the tact of the sturdy hunter kept him a few paces in the rear, "see how those mischievous squirrels hop and chatter upon the boughs ! They seem to know that your presence is a protection to them."

"I often wonder, Reginald, how you can shoot such playful and graceful animals ; you, who have taste enough to admire their beauty, and who can find sport more worthy of your rifle."

"It is childish sport, Lucy ; yet they are no contemptible additions to the table ; their furs are useful, and there is some skill in shooting them—that is, in shooting them properly."

"If I were a man, I would shoot nothing but lions and tigers, buffaloes or bears !" said his sister.



"A pretty Amazon, truly!" said Reginald, laughing. "Methinks your thoughts are not always so warlike. Come, Lucy, now that we are alone (for our good friend Baptiste is out of ear-shot), you need not pout or blush if I ask you whether Ethelston is expected soon to return?"

"Indeed, I know not, Reginald," said his sister, blushing, in spite of his prohibition. "His last letter to the colonel mentioned something about privateers and the rupture with France. Papa did not seem desirous of communicating much upon the subject, so I dropped it."

"True," said Reginald; "the French will not soon forget or forgive the loss of their fine frigate, the *Insurgente*, which was taken the other day so gallantly by the *Constellation*. I doubt not they will endeavor to cripple our trade in the West Indies. Edward has got a little craft that can run, if she can not fight."

"I am sure Edward will never run if it is possible to fight," said Lucy, a little piqued.

"There, again, you speak the truth: it is because his courage is so tempered by his judgment, that he is fit to be intrusted with other lives and property than his own; if it is *not* possible to fight he will have sense and skill enough to show the Frenchman his heels.—By the by, Lucy, which vessel is he now commanding?"

Again there was a decided blush, and almost a pout on Lucy's full lip, as she said: "You know, brother, that the *Adventure* and the *Pocahontas* are both in port, and the vessel he is now on board of is the—"

"Oh! I remember," said Reginald, laughing; "she was to have been called the *Lily*; but Edward did not choose to hear that name in every common sailor's and negro's mouth; so he altered it to the *Pride of Ohio*, which means, in his vocabulary, the same thing."

"I wish," said Lucy, "there was any Mary, or Charlotte, or any other name under the sun, about which I could tease you! Have a little patience, Mr. Reginald; my turn will come; you shall see what mercy I will show you then!"

Thus did the brother and sister jest with each other until they reached the spot appointed for the interview. As they had arrived rather before the time, they imagined that the



War-Eagle had not yet come ; but Baptiste, putting his finger to his mouth, blew a long, shrill signal-whistle, and in a few minutes the chief appeared, accompanied by Wingenund. As they emerged from the forest, and approached, Reginald looked at his sister to see the effect produced by their appearance ; for the chief was dressed in a manner calculated to display his noble figure and countenance to a better advantage than on the preceding day. His long black hair was parted from his forehead, and gathered into a mass, confined by a narrow fillet made from the fur of the white weasel, and surmounted by an eagle's feather. It seemed that his vow of war and revenge was for the time canceled ; for the lines of black paint which had disfigured his face were removed, and the commanding form and features were not marred by any grotesque or fanciful attire. His brawny neck was bare, and a portion of his bold, open chest appeared beneath the light hunting-shirt, which was his only upper vesture. The ponderous war-club was still at his girdle, but the scalp had disappeared ; and his light, free step upon the grass was like that of a young elk on the prairie.

The dress of Wingenund was unaltered. He was still very weak from the loss of blood, and the pain consequent upon his wound ; his arm rested in a sling, made from the plaited bark of elm ; and the air of languor cast over his countenance by sleeplessness and suffering, gave additional effect to the delicacy of his features, and the deep, dark luster of his eyes.

"Our new brother is indeed fine-looking!" said Lucy, as War-Eagle drew near. "What a haughty step and bearing he has! Wingenund is too gentle to be an Indian!"

"He is as brave as gentle, Lucy: look at his arm!" and, as she did look at the wounded limb, she remembered that only yesterday it had saved her brother's life.

The greeting between Reginald and the two Indians was cordial ; he then presented his sister to them both in turn. The chieftain, placing his hand upon his heart, fixed upon her that penetrating look, with which he had before scrutinized her brother: it was not the bold gaze of vulgarity admiring beauty, but the child of nature, reading, after his own fashion, a page in her book.

"War-Eagle," said Lucy to him, in her own gentle tone of



voice, "I know all that passed yesterday, and you are now my brother!"

As she pronounced his name in English, a gleam shot from his eye, and a perceptible and sudden change came over his countenance: it seemed produced by some unexpected association; and Lucy was surprised at the deep pathos of his voice, as he replied: "The Great Spirit has made the sun to shine upon my white brother's path! His heart is brave; his arm is strong; and his sister is like a flower of the prairie!—her voice comes upon the ear like a pleasant dream;" These last words he spoke rather to himself than addressing those around him.

Lucy was not displeased with the Indian's compliment, and was about to speak to Wingenund, when Reginald said aloud: "Come, let us withdraw among those thick trees; we have many things to talk about." His proposal being assented to, the whole party were soon reassembled under a branching oak.

While they were effecting this maneuver, the guide took an opportunity of interchanging a few sentences with War-Eagle; the result of which was apparently satisfactory to the honest woodsman, for his face instantly resumed its usual frank and careless expression.

"Lucy," said her brother, "as you have thought proper to accompany me here, you must play your part as Queen of the Feast. I hope my brothers will value these baubles more from your hands than from mine." Thus instructed, Lucy opened the canvas package, which the guide had hitherto carried, and presenting the large rifle to the chief, she said to him:

"War-Eagle, your brother and your white sister give you this rifle, as a mark of their friendship; and with it they give you powder and lead enough to shoot all the deer and bears in the territory."

The chief placed her hand and her brother's both upon his heart, saying: "War-Eagle thanks you. May the Great Spirit love you, and guard your path!"

He then poised and examined the rifle, which was a piece of no ordinary beauty and excellence; while Baptiste whispered to him in his own language: "It is loaded."



Lucy then turned to Wingenund, and presenting him with the lighter fowling-piece, said to him : " With this, a sister thanks Wingenund for a brother's life."

The boy cast his eyes modestly to the ground, saying : " Wingenund is too happy. War-Eagle will tell his name to the braves in council. The sister of Netis is good to him ; Wingenund is ready to die !"

" Indeed," said Lucy to the guide, " I fear he is very faint and ill ; ask the chief how he passed the night !"

" Wingenund is not ill," said the boy, with a smile ; " he is very happy."

Meanwhile Baptiste, having conferred with the chief, replied : " Why, Miss Lucy, the wound was a very bad 'un, and he lost a power o' blood ; once or twice in the night, War-Eagle thought he might not get over it ; but he is better now, and though unable to bear much fatigue, he is a hardy young plant, and will take as much killing as an eel."

" Come, Baptiste," said Reginald ; " I know you put something to eat and drink into that sack with the ammunition ; War-Eagle must feast with us to-day."

The guide, opening his capacious wallet, drew from it a venison pasty, some bread, and a couple of bottles of Madeira. Lucy declined taking more than a crust of bread, merely tasting the wine to the health of the hunters. Wingenund was equally abstemious, and sat a little apart with his new sister ; while Reginald, Baptiste and the chief made a more substantial luncheon. The latter, being asked by Reginald how he liked the wine, replied carelessly : " Good." But it was evident that he drank it rather from courtesy, than because it pleased his palate."

Reginald now desired the guide to speak to War-Eagle in his own tongue, and to gather from him all the requisite particulars for his joining the Delawares in their summer hunt beyond the Mississippi. He had long been anxious to visit some of those scenes which Baptiste had so often described ; and his father having expressed a wish that he should go to St. Louis on some business connected with his investments in the fur trade, he thought that so fair an opportunity could not be lost.

While the guide and the chief conversed in a low and



earnest tone of voice, and Reginald listened with an idle curiosity, imagining now and then that he could catch their meaning, Lucy became much interested in her conversation with Wingemund: she was surprised at his intelligence and proficiency in English, and was touched by the melancholy expression of his countenance and of his deep, lustrous eyes. As she was speaking, he suddenly and impressively placed his finger on her arm, then raised it to his own lips, as a sign to her to be silent; then creeping two or three yards from the party, he threw himself full-length upon the grass with his ear to the ground. Lucy listened attentively, but could hear nothing but the gentle breeze stirring the leaves, and the regular sound of Snowdrop's teeth as he nibbled the young grass.

The three hunters were still busy with their arrangements for the summer, when Wingemund, resuming his sitting posture, uttered an almost imperceptible sound, like the hiss of a small serpent. Instantly, as if by instinct, the War-Eagle grasped his rifle, and looked inquiringly on the intelligent countenance of the boy.

"Wingemund hears men and horses," was the short reply.

Baptiste strained his practiced ears to the utmost, as did Reginald, without success. Even War-Eagle seemed for a moment unable to catch the sound. He then whispered to Reginald: "Wingemund speaks truth; there are men—not a few."

Several minutes elapsed before our hero and the guide could distinguish the tramp of horses and the voices of men speaking angrily.

Our hero and his party being effectually screened from view by the dense laurel thicket, could listen unobserved to the conversation of those who were approaching; and the following expressions, delivered in a loud and authoritative tone, at once attracted and absorbed their attention: "It is impossible that the fellow should escape, we have scouts out in every direction. There can be no doubt that the camp which we have just found in the woods is the one where he passed the night with other red-skins, for the embers are still warm. Dickenson and Brown are gone south toward Ma-



rietta; Henderson and his party are tracking the prairies to the north; it is impossible he should long escape; and young Hervey thinks he should know him anywhere!"

While the person who appeared to be the leader of the unseen party was thus speaking, War-Eagle whispered a few sentences to Wingenund, to which the intelligent youth only replied by a look; the chief then conversed apart, in a low, earnest voice, with the guide, who ended by grasping his hand, and saying, in the Delaware tongue: "**Grande-Hache will do it at the risk of his life.**"

The chief appeared satisfied, and rising with calm dignity, he tightened the belt at his waist, to which he hung his newly-acquired knife and ammunition; and throwing his rifle into the hollow of his left arm, he said to Reginald: "War-Eagle must leave his brother Netis; Grande-Hache will tell him all; before two moons have passed Netis will come to hunt the bison with his brother; and he shall smoke **with the braves of the Lenapé.**"

"He will," replied Reginald, warmly pressing his hand, and at the same time passing the cornelian ring upon one of the fingers of the chief. "If the Great Spirit gives him life, he will come and hunt and smoke with his Lenapé brother."

The chief, now turning to Lucy, drew from his head the eagle-feather, which was passed through his hair, and which was quaintly stained and ornamented with porcupine quills: offering it gracefully to her, he said, in a voice of musical gentleness: "War-Eagle wishes happiness to the 'pale flower of Mooshanne'; many braves have tried to pluck this feather from his head; no Dacotah nor Pawnee has touched it and lived! The sister of Netis may fasten it in her hair—let none but a brave warrior raise his eyes to it there."

"Thank you, dear War-Eagle," said Lucy, kindly; "I promise you it shall never be touched by an unworthy hand; and do you take this string of red beads," giving him at the same time a coral necklace, "and wear it for the sake of **your white sister.**"

The chief received this gift with evident pleasure; and waving his hand in adieu, whispering at the same time one parting word to Wingenund, he strode leisurely away, and was soon lost in the deep glades of the forest.



## CHAPTER V.

## WINGENUND.

LUCY BRANDON was not a little surprised at the chief's sudden departure; and with the frankness natural to her character, inquired of her brother whether he could explain its cause. Reginald appeared either unable or unwilling to do so; and an appeal to the guide produced only the following unsatisfactory reply:

"War-Eagle is like the bird after which he's called—it ain't easy to explain or follow his flight."

Wingenund remained silent, but every now and then he fixed his bright and speaking eyes upon Lucy, as if he would divine her thoughts. That young lady, though at a loss to account for her embarrassment, entertained a fear that all was not right, and proposed to her brother to return to Mooshanne.

Snowdrop was soon caught, and the little party moved leisurely homeward, Reginald and the guide leading the way, and Wingenund walking by the side of Lucy's pony; after riding a few minutes, she recovered her spirits, and remembering that there was no foundation for a surmises of evil, she resumed the conversation with her young companion, which the chief's departure had interrupted. "Tell me, Wingenund, who is the 'Black Father,' of whom you speak?"

"He is very good," said the boy, seriously. "He talks with the Great Spirit; and he tells us all the Great Spirit has done; how He made the earth, and the water; and how He punishes bad men, and makes good men happy."

"He is a white man, then?" said Lucy.

"He is," replied the lad; "but though he is a white man, he always speaks truth, and does good, and drinks no fire-water, and is never angry."

What a humiliating reflection is it, thought Lucy to herself, that in the mind of this young savage the idea of white men



is naturally associated with drunkenness and strife! "Tell me, Wingemund," she continued, "is the 'Black Father' old?"

"Many winters have passed over his head, and their snow rests upon his hair."

"Does he live with you always?"

"He comes and he goes, like the sunshine and the rain; he is always welcome; and the Lenapé love him."

"Can he speak your tongue well?"

"He speaks many tongues, and tries to make peace between the tribes; but he loves the Lenapé, and teaches 'the Forest-Bird' to talk with the Great Spirit."

"Does your sister speak to the Black Father in her own tongue?"

"Sometimes, and sometimes in the English: but often in a strange tongue, written on a great book. The Black Father reads it, and the Forest-Bird opens her ears, and looks on his face, and loves his words; and then she tells them all to me. But Wingemund is a child of the Lenapé—he can not understand these things!"

"You will understand them," said Lucy, kindly, "if you only have patience: you know, she added, smiling, "your sister understands them, and she is a Lenapé, too!"

"Yes," said the boy; "but nobody is like Forest-Bird."

"She must, indeed, be a remarkable person," said Lucy, humoring her young companion's fancy; "still, as you have the same father and mother, and the same blood, whatever she learns, you can learn too."

"I have no father or mother," said Wingemund, sadly, and he added, in a mysterious whisper, drawing near to Lucy, "Forest-Bird never had a father or mother."

"Never had a father or mother!" repeated Lucy, as the painful thought occurred to her that poor Wingemund was deranged.

"Never," said the boy, in the same tone; "she came from *there*," pointing as he spoke toward the north-west quarter of the heaven.

"How melancholy is it," said Lucy to herself, "to think that this brave, amiable boy should be so afflicted! that so intelligent and quick a mind should be like a lyre with a



broken string! Still," thought she, "I will endeavor to understand his meaning and undeceive him."

"Dear Wingemund, you are mistaken — your sister had the same father and mother as yourself; she may have learned much, and may understand things strange to you, but you might learn them too."

"Wingemund's father and mother are dead," said the boy, in a voice of deep and suppressed emotion; "he will not tell you *how* they died, for it makes his heart throb and his eyes beam; but you are good to him, and shall not see his anger. Forest Bird never had a father; the Great Spirit gave her to the Lenapé."

While Lucy was musing how she should endeavor to dispel this strange delusion, which seemed to have taken such firm hold of her young companion's mind, Reginald and Baptiste halted, and the latter said: "You see that party approaching; they may put some troublesome questions, leave me to answer them. Wingemund, you know what I mean?"

"Wingemund does not understand English," said the boy, a slight smile of irony lurking in the corner of his mouth.

The approaching party consisted of eight or ten men, all armed with rifles, excepting two, who were mounted, and who carried cutlasses and large horse-pistols; among the pedestrians towered the gigantic form of young Mike Smith, who has already been presented to the reader before the store of David Muir, in Marietta; and among the horsemen was the younger Hervey, leading his friends to scour the whole country in search of the slayer of his brother; they were all in a high state of excitement; and despite the cool and unmoved demeanor of the guide, he was not without apprehension that they might desire to wreak their vengeance on Wingemund.

"Ha! Baptiste," said Hervey, grasping the guide's hand; "you are the very man we are in search of; we have already been to the colonel's, and he told us we should find you with his son, and with Miss Brandon, in this quarter. We want your assistance, man, and that speedily too."

"How can I serve you?" said the guide; "what is the matter? you seem bent on a hunt?"

"A hunt?" exclaimed Hervey, "yes a hunt of a red-skin devil! Harkee, Baptiste!" and stooping from his horse, he



repeated to the guide, in a low voice, but clear enough to be heard by all present, the circumstances attending his brother's death.

"A daring act, indeed," said the guide, musing: "but could not you follow the trail while it was fresh, yesterday?"

"We followed it to a creek leading to the Muskingum, and there we lost it."

"Can you describe the appearance of the Indian?" inquired the guide.

"A tall, handsome fellow, as straight as a poplar, and with a leap like a panther, so he seemed; but he gave me such a knock on the head, that my eyes swam for five minutes."

A cold shudder ran through Lucy's limbs as, comparing this slight sketch of War-Eagle with his sudden departure and the guide's caution to Wingemund, she recognized in the chief the object of their search: glancing her eye timidly at Wingemund, she could read on his countenance no traces of uneasiness; he was playing with Snowdrop's mane, his gun resting on the ground, and apparently unconscious of what was passing.

After a minute's reflection, the guide continued: "You say that the Indian's rifle was broken in half; did you notice anything about it?"

"Nothing: it was a strong, coarse piece; we have brought the stock with us; here it is," he added, calling up one of his party to whom it had been intrusted.

The guide took it in his hand, and at the first glance detected the imitation of a feather, roughly but distinctly cut with a knife; his own suspicions were at once confirmed, although his countenance betrayed no change of expression; but Mike Smith, who had been looking over his shoulder, had also observed the marks of the feather, and noticed it immediately aloud, adding: "Come, Baptiste, you know all the Indian marks between Alleghany and the Missouri; what red-skin has this belonged to?"

"Mike," said the guide, coolly, "a man's tongue must shoot far and true to hit such a mark as that."

"And yet, Baptiste, if I'd been as long at the picking and trapping as you, I think I'd have known something about it."

"Ay, that's the way of it," replied Baptiste; "you young uns always think you can shave a hog with a horn spoon! I



s'pose, Master Mike, you can tell a buzzard from a mocking-bird; but if I was to show you a feather, and ask you *what* buzzard it belonged to, the answer might not be easy to find."

"You're an old fool," growled Mike, angrily; and he added, as his eye rested suddenly upon Wingemund: "What cub is that standing by Miss's white pony? we'll see if he knows this mark. Come here, you devil's brat."

Not a muscle in the boy's face betrayed his consciousness that he was addressed.

"Come here, you young red-skin!" shouted Mike, yet more angrily, "or I'll sharpen your movements with the point of my knife."

Reginald's fiery temper was ill calculated to brook the young backwoodsman's coarse and violent language: placing himself directly between him and Wingemund, he said to the former in a stern and determined tone: "Master Smith, you forget yourself; that boy is one of my company, and is not to be exposed either to insult or injury."

"Here's a pretty coil about a young red skin," said Mike, trying to conceal his anger under a forced laugh; "how do we know that he ain't a brother or a son of the Indian we're in search of; 'sblood, if we could find out that he was, we'd tar him, and burn him over a slow fire!"

"I tell you again," said Reginald, "that he is guilty of no crime; that he saved my life, yesterday, at the risk of his own; and that, while I live, neither you nor any of your party shall touch a hair of his head."

Baptiste fearing the result of more angry words, and moved by an appealing look from Miss Brandon, now interposed, and laying his hand on Smith's shoulder, said: "Come, Master Mike, there is no use in threatening the young red-skin, when you see that he does not understand a word that you say; tell me what you wish to inquire of him, and I will ask him in his own tongue."

"His tongue be darned," said Mike; "I'll wager a hat against a gallon of David Muir's best, that the brat knows English as well as you or I, although he seems to have nothing to do but to count the tassels on the edge of his shir. I'll show you, without hurting him," he added, in a lower tone, "that I'm not far wrong."



"You swear not to injure him?" said Reginald, who overheard what passed.

"I do," said Mike; "I only want to show you that he can't make a fool of Mike Smith." Here he called up one of the men from the rear; and having whispered something in his ear, he said, in a loud and distinct tone of voice: "Jack, we have found out that this Indian cub belongs to the party, one of whom murdered poor Hervey. Life for life is the law of the backwoods; do you step a little on one side; I will count four, and when I come to the four, split me the young rascal's head, either with a bullet or with your ax."

"For Heaven's sake, as you are men," exclaimed Lucy, "spare him!"

"Peace, Miss Brandon," said Mike; "your brother will explain to you that it must be so."

The guide would fain have whispered a word to the boy, but he was too closely watched by Smith, and he was obliged to trust to Wingendum's nerves and intelligence.

"Are you ready, Jack?" said Mike, audibly.

"Yes!" and he counted slowly, pausing between each number, "one--two--*three!*" At the pronunciation of this last word, Wingendum, whose countenance had not betrayed, by the movement of a muscle, or by the expression of a single feature, the slightest interest in what was passing, amused himself by patting the great rough head which Wolf rubbed against his hand, as if totally unconscious that the deadly weapon was raised, and that the next word from the hunter's lips was to be his death-warrant.

"Darn it, you are right, after all, Baptiste," said Mike Smith; "the brat certainly does not understand us, or he'd have pricked his ears when I came to number three; so, do you ask him, in his own lingo, if he knows that mark on the rifle-butt, and can tell us to what red-skin tribe it belongs."

The guide now addressed a few words to Wingendum in the Delaware tongue, while Reginald and Lucy interchanged a glance of wonder and admiration at the boy's sagacity and courage.

"He tells me that he has seen this mark before," said the guide.

"Has he?" replied Mike. "ask him whether it is that of



a Shawnee or a Wyandot, of an Iroquois or of a Delaware?"

After again conferring with Wingenund, the guide muttered to himself: "This youngster won't tell a lie to keep a bullet from his brain or a halter from his neck; I must act for him." He added, in a louder tone: "Mike, a word with you; it is not unlikely that the Indian you're in search of is the same who gave the boy that wound, and who tried to kill Master Reginald yesterday; if it is so, he wants no more punishing; he has his allowance already."

"How so?" said Mike.

"He is dead, man—killed on the spot. Do you and Hervey meet me here to-morrow, an hour before noon; I will take you to the place where the body is buried, and you shall judge for yourself whether it is that of the man you seek."

"It's a bargain," said Mike; "we'll come to the time. Now, lads, forward to Hervey's Clearing. Let's have a merry supper to-night; and to-morrow, if the guide shows us the carcass of this rascal, why we can't hurt that much; but we'll pay off a long score, one day or other, with some of the redskins. Sorry to have kept you waitin', Miss; and hope we haven't scared you," said the rough fellow, making, as he drew off his party, an awkward attempt at a parting bow to Lucy.

"That was a clever turn of Baptiste's," said Reginald, in a low voice, to his sister; "he has made them believe that the cowardly knave who tried to stab me was the perpetrator of the daring outrage which they seek to avenge!"

"And it was really War-Eagle?" said Lucy, with a slight shudder, "he who looks so noble and so gentle, was it he who did it?"

"I believe so," said Reginald.

"But is it not wrong in us to be friends with him, and to aid his escape?"

"Indeed," replied her brother, "it admits of doubt; let us ask the guide; he will speak now without reserve;" and accordingly Reginald repeated to Baptiste the question and his sister's scruples.

"Why you see, Miss," said the wary hunter, "there is no proof that War-Eagle did it, though I confess it was too bold



a deed to have been done by a dog of a Wyandot: but I will tell you, Miss," he added, with increasing energy and vehemence, "if the War-Eagle did it, you will yourself, when you know all, confess that he did it nobly, and that he deserves no punishment from man. That elder Hervey was one of the bloodthirsty band by whom the harmless Christian Indians\* were murdered; and it is believed that it was by Hervey's own hand that Wingenund's father fell; *if* War-Eagle revenged this cruel murder, and yet spared the life of the younger brother, when lying helpless at his feet, who shall dare to blame him, or move a foot in his pursuit?"

"He speaks the truth, Lucy," said her brother; "according to the rules by which retaliation is practiced by the rest of mankind, War-eagle would have been justified in punishing with death such an act of unprovoked atrocity; but it is a dangerous subject to discuss; you had better forget *all* you have heard about it; and in case of further inquiries being made in your presence, imitate the happy unconsciousness lately displayed by Wingenund.

"Come here, my dear young brother," he added, in a kindly tone, "and tell us—did you really think that hot-headed chap was going to shoot you when he counted number three?"

"No," said the boy, with a scornful smile.

"And why not? for he is a violent and angry man."

"He dared not," was the reply.

"How so?"

"He is a fool!" said the boy, in the same scornful tone; "a fool scarcely fit to frighten the fawn of an antelope! If he had touched me or attempted to shoot me, Netis and Grande-Hache would have killed him immediately."

\* Alluding to the massacre of the Moravian Delawares at "Gnadenhutten."



## CHAPTER VI.

## A FLITTING.

COLONEL BRANDON received Wingemund very kindly; and within half an hour of the arrival of the party, they were all seated at his hospitable board, whereon smoked venison-steaks, various kinds of fowls, a substantial ham, cakes of rice and Indian maize. On the side-table were cream, wild honey, cheese, and preserved fruits, all these delicacies being admirably served under the superintendence of Aunt Mary, who was delighted with Wingemund, praised the extreme beauty of his eyes and features, telling the colonel, in a whisper, that if she had been thirty-five years younger, she should have been afraid of losing her heart! The youth was indeed the hero of the day; all were grateful to him for his gallant preservation of Reginald's life, and all strove with equal anxiety to make him forget that he was among strangers. Nor was the task difficult; for though he had only the use of one hand, it was surprising to see the tact and self-possession with which he conducted himself, the temperate quietness with which he ate and drank, and the ease with which he handled some of the implements at table, which he probably saw for the first time. Baptiste was a privileged person in the colonel's house, and was allowed to dine as he pleased, either with his master, or with Perrot and the other servants. On this occasion, he was present in the dining-room, and seemed to take a pleasure in drawing out the young Delaware, and in making him talk on subjects which he knew would be interesting to the rest of the party. Wingemund was quiet and reserved in his replies, except when a question was put to him by Lucy, to whom he gave his answers with the greatest *volonté*, telling her more than once, that she reminded him of his sister, Forest-Bird, but that the latter was taller, and had darker hair. While addressing her, he kept his large, speaking eyes so riveted upon Lucy's countenance, that she cast her own to the ground, almost blushing at the boy's earn-



est and admiring gaze. To relieve herself from embarrassment, she again inquired about this mysterious sister, saying, "Tell me, Wingenund, has she taught you to read, as well as to speak our tongue?"

"No," said the youth; "Forest-Bird talks with the Great Spirit, and with paper books, and so does the Black Father; but Wingenund can not understand them,—he is only a poor Indian."

Here Reginald, whose curiosity was much excited, inquired, "Does the Forest Bird look kindly on the young chiefs of the tribe?—Will she be the wife of a chief?"

There was something both of surprise and scorn in Wingenund's countenance, as he replied, "Forest-Bird is kind to all—the young chiefs find wives among the daughters of the Delawares;—but the antelope mates not with the moose though they feed on the same Prairie. The Great Spirit knows where Forest-Bird was born; but her race is unknown to the wise men among the Tortoises."

Reginald and his sister were equally at a loss to understand his meaning; both looked inquiringly at the guide, who was rubbing his ear, as if rather puzzled by the young Delaware's answer. At length he said; "Why, Miss Lucy, you see, much of what the lad says is as plain to me as the sight of my rifle; for the tribes of the Lenapé are as well known to me as the *totems* of the Ojibeways. The Great nation is divided into three tribes:—the Minsi, or the Wolf-tribe (sometimes called also Puncsit, or round-foot); the Unalacticos, or the Turkey-tribe; and the Unamis, or the Tortoise tribe. The last are considered the principal and most ancient; and as Wingenund's family are of this band, he spoke just now of their wise men. But who, or what kin' o' crittur this Forest-Bird can be, would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to tell, let alone a poor hunter who knows little out of the line of his trade."

"Then, Baptiste," said Lucy, smiling, "your trade is a pretty extensive one, for I think you have more knowledge in your head on most subjects than half the lawyers and clerks in the territory."

"There it is, Miss Lucy; you're always a-givin' me a little dose of flattery, just as I give my patches a bit of grease to



make the Doctor swallow his lead pills. You ladies think we're all alike—young sparks, and tough old chaps like me,—if you do but dip our fingers into the honey-pot, you know we shall lick them as soon as your backs are turned! But it is getting late," he added, rising from his seat; "and I have much to say to this youth, who is already tired; with your leave, Miss, I will retire with him, and see that he has a comfortable sleeping-quarter, and that he wants for nothing."

"Pray do so," said Lucy; "let him be treated as if he were one of our own family. I am sure, dear papa, such would be your wish," she added, turning to her father.

"It is indeed, my child," said the colonel. "Wingenund, again I beg you to receive a father's best thanks for your brave defense of his son."

"It was nothing," said the boy, modestly. "You are all good, too good to Wingenund; when he gets to the Far Prairie, he will tell the Forest-Bird and the Black Father to speak to the Great Spirit, that He may smile on my white father and on my brother; and," he added, slowly raising his dark, eloquent eyes to Lucy's face, "that he may send down pleasant sunshine and refreshing dew on the Lily of Mooshanne." So saying, he turned and left the room, accompanied by the guide.

Baptiste, who knew that the well-intentioned offer of a bedroom and its comforts would be a great annoyance to Wingenund, took the lad out with him to a dry barn behind the house, where there was an abundant supply of clean straw, and where he intended to lodge him for the night. "Wingenund," said he, "you will rest here for some hours; but we must go long before daylight to meet War-Eagle, according to my promise."

"I will be ready," replied the youth; and casting himself down on a bundle of straw, in five minutes his wounds and fatigues were forgotten in a refreshing sleep, over which hovered the bright dreams of youth, wherein the sweet tones of his sister's voice were confused with the blue eyes of Lucy, and yet withal, a sleep such as guilt can never know, and the wealth of the Indies can not purchase.

Before three o'clock on the following morning, the guide



reëntered the barn with a light step; not so light, however, as to escape the quick ear of the young Indian, who leaped from his straw couch, and throwing his rifle over his shoulder, stood before the hunter. "I hope you slept well," said the latter, "and that your arm gives you less pain?"

"I slept till you came," said the boy, "and the pain sleeps still. I feel nothing of it."

"Wingenund will be like his father," said the guide; "he will laugh at pain, and fatigue, and danger; and his war-path will be sprinkled with the blood of his enemies."

The youth drew himself proudly up; and though gratified by the guide's observation, merely replied: "The Great Spirit knows—I am ready; let us go."

Baptiste had provided a couple of horses, and they started at a brisk pace, as he wished to reach the spot where he had appointed to meet War-Eagle soon after daylight. To one less familiar with the woods, the tangled and winding path through which he led the way would have offered many impediments; but Baptiste went rapidly forward without hesitation or difficulty, Wingenund following in silence; and after a brisk ride of three hours they came to an opening in the forest, where a log-hut was visible, and beyond it the broad expanse of Ohio's stream.

The guide here whispered to Wingenund to remain concealed in the thicket with the horses, while he reconnoitered the hut; because he knew that it was sometimes used as a shelter and a rendezvous by some of the lawless and desperate characters on the borders of the settlements.

Having finished his examination, and ascertained that the hut was empty, he returned to Wingenund, and desired him to come down to the water's edge, where he was to make a signal for War-Eagle, who ought to be now at no great distance. The youth accordingly went to the river's bank, and understanding from the guide that there was no occasion for further concealment, he gave three whistles in a peculiar tone, but exceedingly loud and shrill. For some time they listened for a reply. Nothing was heard, except the beak of the woodpecker upon the bark of the elm, and the notes of the various feathered choristers chirping their matin song.

After a pause of several minutes, the guide said: "Sure-



ly some accident has detained War-Eagle! Perhaps he has failed in getting the canoe. Repeat the signal, Wingenund."

"War-Eagle is here," replied the youth, who was quietly leaning on his rifle, with an abstracted air.

Again the guide listened attentively; and as he was unable to distinguish the slightest sound indicative of the chief's approach, he was rather vexed at the superior quickness implied in Wingenund's reply, and said somewhat testily: "A moose might hear something of him, or a blood-hound might find the wind of him, but I can make out nothing, and my ears ain't used to be stuffed with cotton, neither!"

"Grande-Hache is a great warrior, and Wingenund would be proud to follow in his war-path; eyes and ears are the gift of the Great Spirit."

"How know you that War-Eagle is here?" inquired the guide, impatiently.

"By that," replied the boy, pointing to a scarcely perceptible mark on the bank a few yards from his feet; "that is the moccasin of the War Eagle; he has been to the hut this morning; below that footprint you will see on the sand the mark of where his canoe has touched the ground."

"The boy is right," muttered Baptiste, examining the marks carefully. "I believe I am no hunter, but an ass after all, with no better ears and eyes than Master Perrot, or any other parlor-boarder."

In a very few minutes the sound of the paddle was heard, and War-Eagle brought his canoe to the bank; a brief conversation now took place between him and Baptiste, in which some particulars were arranged for Reginald's visit to the Western prairie. The guide then taking from his wallet several pounds of bread and beef, and a large parcel of tobacco, added these to the stores in the bottom of the canoe, and having shaken hands heartily with the chief and Wingenund, returned leisurely on his homeward way; but he still muttered to himself as he went; and it was evident that he could not shake off the annoyance which he felt at being "out-crafted," as he called it, "by a boy!"

We will not follow the tedious and toilsome voyage of War-Eagle and his young friend in the canoe, a voyage in



which, after descending the Ohio, they had to make their way up the Mississippi to its junction with the Missouri, and thence up the latter river to the mouth of the Osage river, which they also ascended between two and three hundred miles before they rejoined their band. It is sufficient for the purposes of our tale to inform the reader that they reached their destination in safety, and that Wingemund recovered from the effects of his severe wound.

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## CHAPTER VII

### THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT.

FROM the time of War-Eagle's departure, Reginald Brandon was all impatience to rejoin his Indian brother on the prairie in response to the latter's invitation. In these times we have only to take the cars, and be whisked off to the shadow of the Rocky Mountains in three days; but in 1799 the case was different. A large party, well-armed, and also well-provided with presents for distribution among the Indians, had to be organized, horses (pack and riding) procured, also bateaux and canoes, to transport the heavier articles by water, and many preparations, entailing time and expense, were necessary. But Colonel Brandon had always proved a liberal father to Reginald, and the young man's journey promised to be a good speculation even in a monetary point of view. Those early days were the palmy ones of the fur trade, when profits of four or five hundred per cent. could be got in trade from the Indian tribes of the plains—*if one could make friends with them*. The opportunity of the friendship of the war-chief of so noted a tribe as the Delawares was not to be neglected; and so Reginald soon found his preparations completed.

We will not detain the reader with the progress of their journey to St. Louis in bateaux and their start from thence across the prairies. Suffice it to say that one bright, sunshiny morning, Reginald Brandon and Baptiste, at the head of a



well-appointed party, among whom were Mike Smith, and a famous hunter named Bear-skin, came in sight of the Delaware camp, which Baptiste, who had gone forward alone, as an envoy, the evening before, assured Reginald was ready for their coming.

They descried the Indians sitting at the root of a maple-tree as if awaiting their arrival: a single glance enabled Reginald to recognize both, and springing from his horse, he greeted War-Eagle and Wingenund with affectionate cordiality, and read in the looks of both, though they spoke little, that he was heartily welcome. When they had saluted Baptiste, Reginald introduced them in form to the other members of his party, and among the rest to Monsieur Perrot, who, having as yet seen few Indians and those of the meanest class, was surprised at the noble and dignified appearance of War-Eagle, to whom he doffed his cap with as much respect as if he had been field-marshal of France.

Having made a short halt, during which the pipe was passed around, and some cakes of Indian corn and honey set before their guests, the party again moved forward, under the direction of War-Eagle. Leaving the heavy timber in the valley, they ascended the opposite hill, where a magnificent prospect opened upon their view; below them was an undulating prairie of boundless extent, through the middle of which ran a tributary branch of Grand River; behind them lay the verdant mass of forest from which they had lately emerged; the plain in front was dotted with the lodges of the Delawares and Osages, while scattered groups of Indians, and grazing horses, gave life, animation, and endless variety to the scene.

Halting for a moment on the brow of the hill, War-Eagle pointed out to Reginald the lodge of his father, Tamenund, distinguished above the rest by its superior size and elevation, and at the same time showed him, at the other extremity of the encampment, a lodge of similar dimension, which he described as being that of the Osage chief.

"How is he called?" inquired Reginald.

"Mahéga," replied War-Eagle.

At the mention of this name, the guide uttered one of those peculiar sounds, something between a whistle and a grunt, by which Reginald knew that something was passing



in his mind ; but on this occasion, without apparently noticing the interruption, he continued, addressing War-Eagle : “ Will Mahéga receive me too as a brother—is the Osage chief a friend to the white men ? ”

“ Mahéga is a warrior,” replied the Indian ; “ he hunts with the Lenapé and he must be their brother.”

Not only did this answer appear evasive, but there was also something more than usually constrained in the tone and manner of War-Eagle, which did not escape the observation of Reginald, and with the straightforward openness of his character, he said : “ War-Eagle, my heart is open to you, and my tongue can be silent if required—speak to me freely, and tell me if Mahéga is a friend or not ; is he a brave or a snake ? ”

War-Eagle, fixing his searching eye upon Reginald, replied “ Mahéga is a warrior—the scalps in his lodge are many—his name is not a lie, but his heart is not that of a Lenapé—War-Eagle will not speak of him :—Grand-Hache knows him and my brother’s eyes will be open.”

Having thus spoken, the young chief added a few words in his own tongue to Baptiste ; and making a sign for Wingendum to follow, he galloped off at speed toward the encampment.

Reginald, surprised, and somewhat inclined to be displeased at their abrupt departure, turned to the guide and inquired the cause of it, also the meaning of War-Eagle’s last words.

Baptiste, shaking his head significantly, replied in a low voice : “ I know Mahéga well—at least I have heard much of him ; his name signifies Red hand, and, as the young chief says, it tells no lie, for he has killed many : last year he attacked a war-party of the Outagamis (the Fox Indians), near the Great River, and cut them off to a man ; he himself killed their chief and several of their warriors : they say he is the strongest and bravest man in the nation.”

“ It seems to me,” said Reginald, “ that War-Eagle and he are not very good friends.”

“ They are not,” replied Baptiste ; “ the young Delaware has evidently some quarrel with him, and therefore would not speak of him—we shall learn what it is before many days are over : meanwhile, Master Reginald, say nothing to any others



of the party on this subject, for they may take alarm, or show suspicion; and if they do your summer hunt may chance to end in rougher play than we expect. I will keep my eye on 'Red-hand,' and will soon tell you what tree he's making for."

"Why did they gallop off so abruptly?" inquired Reginald.

"They are gone to rejoin the bands which are coming out to receive us on our entrance," replied the guide. "We must put our party in their best array, and get the presents ready, for we have not many minutes to spare."

The event proved the correctness of his calculation; for they had scarcely time to select from the packs those articles destined to be presented to the chiefs at this interview, before they saw two large bands of mounted Indians gallop toward them from the opposite extremities of the encampment. As they drew near that which came from the Delaware quarter, and was headed by War-Eagle in person, they checked their speed, and approached slowly; while their leader, advancing in front of the band, saluted Reginald and his party with dignified courtesy. Meanwhile the body of Osages continued their career with headlong speed, shouting, yelling, and going through all the exciting maneuvers of a mock fight, after their wild fashion.

Reginald having learned from Baptiste that this was their mode of showing honor to guests on their arrival, awaited patiently the termination of their maneuvers; and when at length they ceased, and the Osage party reined their horses up by the side of the Delawares, he went forward and shook hands with their leader, a warrior somewhat older than War-Eagle, and of a fine martial appearance. As soon as he found an opportunity, Reginald, turning to Wingemund who was close behind him, inquired, in English, if that Osage chief was Mahéga?

"No," replied the youth, "that is a brave,\* called in their

\* In describing the manners and distinctions of rank among the Indians of the Missouri plains, it is necessary to adopt the terms in common use among the guides and traders, however vague and unsatisfactory these terms may be. In these tribes the chieftainship is partly hereditary and partly elective. There is usually one Great Chief, and there are also chiefs of a second degree, who are chiefs of different bands in the tribe; next to these in rank are the "Braves," the leading warriors of the nation; and in order to be qualified for admission into this rank, an Indian must have killed an enemy, or given other sufficient evidence of courage and capacity. When a war council is held, the opinion of the principal Brave is frequently preferred before that of the chief.



‘tongue the Black-Wolf. Mahéga,” he added, with a peculiar smile, “is very different.”

“How mean you, Wingenund?”

“Black-Wolf,” replied the youth, “is a warrior, and has no fear, but he is not like Mahéga—an antelope is not an elk!”

While this conversation was going on, the party entered the encampment, and wound their way among its scattered lodges, toward that of Tamenund, where, as War-Eagle informed Reginald, a feast was prepared for his reception, to which Mahéga and the other Osage leaders were invited.

On arriving before the Great Lodge, Reginald and his companions dismounted, and giving their horses to the youths in attendance, shook hands in succession with the principal chiefs and braves of the two nations. Reginald was much struck by the benevolent and dignified countenance of the Delaware chief; but in spite of himself, and of a preconceived dislike which he was inclined to entertain toward Mahéga, or Red-hand, his eye rested on that haughty chieftain with mingled surprise and admiration. He was nearly a head taller than those by whom he was surrounded; and his limbs, though cast in a Herculean mold, showed the symmetrical proportions which are so distinctive of the North American Indians; his forehead was bold and high, his nose aquiline, and his mouth broad, firm and expressive of most determined character; his eye was rather small, but bright and piercing as a hawk’s; his hair had been all shaven from his head, with the exception of the scalp-lock on the crown, which was painted scarlet and interwoven with a tuff of horsehair dyed of the same color. Around his muscular throat was suspended a collar formed from the claws of the grizzly bear, ornamented with parti-colored beads, encircled with the delicate fur of the white ermine; his hunting-shirt and leggings were of the finest antelope-skin, and his moccasins were adorned with beads and the stained quills of the porcupine. He leaned carelessly on a bow, which few men in the tribe could bend. At his back were slung his arrows in a quiver made with the wolf-skin, so disposed that the grinning visage of the animal was seen above his shoul-



der ; while a war-club and scalping-knife, fastened to his belt, completed the formidable Mahéga's equipment.

As he glanced his eye over the party of white men, there was an expression of scornful pride on his countenance, which the quick temper of the youthful leader was ill-disposed to brook, had not the prudent counsels of the guide prepared him for the exercise of self-command. Nevertheless, as he turned from the Osage chief to the bulky proportions of his gigantic follower, Mike Smith, he felt that it was like comparing a lion with an ox ; and that, in the event of a quarrel between them, the rifle alone could render its issue doubtful.

The feast of welcome was now prepared in the lodge of Tamenund, which was composed of bison-skins stretched upon poles, arranged in the form of a horse-shoe, and covering an extent of ground apparently not less than twenty yards in length. Reginald observed also several smaller lodges immediately adjoining that of the chief on one side, and on the other a circular tent of wax-cloth, or painted canvas ; evidently procured from white men, as it was of excellent texture, and its door, or aperture, protected by double folds of the same material.

While he was still looking at this comparatively civilized dwelling, with some curiosity to know by whom it might be tenanted, the folds of the opening were pushed aside, and an elderly man appeared, who, after contemplating for a moment the newly-arrived group, came forward to offer them a friendly salutation. He was apparently between fifty and sixty ; but his years were not easily guessed, for his snow-white hair might seem to have numbered seventy winters ; while from the uprightness of his carriage, and the elasticity of his step, he seemed scarcely past the vigor of middle life. In figure he was tall and slight ; his countenance, though tanned by long exposure to the sun, was strikingly attractive, and his mild blue eye beamed with an expression of benevolence not to be mistaken. His dress was a black frock of serge, fastened at the waist by a girdle of the same color, from which was suspended a small bag, wherein he carried the few simples and instruments requisite for his daily offices of charity and kindness. Dark-gray trousers of the coarsest texture, and



moccasins of buffalo-hide, completed the dress of Paul Müller, already mentioned by Wingenund to Reginald as the "Black Father;" under which name, translated according to their various languages, the pious and excellent missionary was known among the Delawares, Osages, Ioways, Otoes, Kanzas and other tribes then inhabiting the regions lying between the Missouri and the Arkansas.

Such was the man who now came forward to greet the newly-arrived party; and such was the irresistible charm of his voice and manner, that from the first Reginald felt himself constrained to love and respect him.

The feast being now ready, and Reginald having pointed out Baptiste and Bear-skin as his officers, or lieutenants, they were invited with him to sit down in the lodge of Tamenund, with the principal chiefs of the Delawares, the chief and great Medicine-man of the Osages, and the Black Father—Mike Smith and the other white men being feasted by a brave in an adjoining room. The pipe was lighted, and having been passed twice round the party with silent gravity, the great Medicine-man made a speech, in which he praised the virtues and hospitality of Tamenund, and paid many compliments to the white guests; after which a substantial dinner was set before them, consisting of roasted buffalo-ribs, venison and boiled maize.

Reginald had never before been present at an Indian feast, and though he had the appetite naturally belonging to his age and health, he soon found that he was no match, as a trencherman, for those among whom he was now placed; and before they had half-finished their meal, he replaced his knife in his sheath, and announced himself satisfied.

The old chief smiled good humoredly, and said that he would soon do better; while Matéga, quietly commencing an attack upon a third buffalo-rib, glanced at him with a look of contempt, that he was at no pains to conceal, and which, as may well be imagined, increased our hero's dislike for the gigantic Osage.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## FOREST-BIRD.

THE novelty of the scene around him rendered Reginald very<sup>10</sup> sleepless on the first night in his new quarters, and finding himself restless, he rose, about half an hour before day-break, threw his rifle over his arm, and sallied forth to enjoy the early freshness of the morning.

Our hero pursued his way through the encampment to its extremity, where a streamlet wound its course among the dells and hillocks of the prairie until it reached the larger river that flowed through the distant forest. After following the stream for a mile or two, the red streaks in the horizon gave notice of day's approach, and observing a hill near him, somewhat more elevated than the rest, Reginald climbed to the top to see the sunrise.

To the west, the undulations of prairie wrapped in mist like the waves of ocean; to the south the lodges and smoldering fires of the camp; to the east a dense and gloomy range of woods, over the summit of whose foliage the dawning sun shed a golden stream of light; the mist curled in a thousand fantastic shapes around the prairie hillocks swarms of children and dusky figures began to emerge from the encampment and troops of horses to crop the pasture. Reginald paused awhile to drink in the beauties of the scene, and then returned slowly by way of the stream.

As he strolled leisurely along, he observed a spot where the trees were larger, and the shade apparently more dense, than in the other portions of the valley; and, being anxious to make himself acquainted with all the localities in the neighborhood of his new home, he followed a small beaten path, which, after sundry windings among the alders, brought him to an open space screened on three sides by the bushes, and bounded on the fourth by the stream. Reginald cast his eyes around this pleasant and secluded spot, until they rested upon an object that riveted them irresistibly. It was a fe-



male figure seated at the root of an ancient poplar, over a low branch of which one arm was carelessly thrown, while with the other she held a book, which she was reading, with such fixed attention as to be altogether unconscious of Reginald's approach. Her complexion was dark, but clear and delicate, and the rich brown hair which fell over her neck and shoulders, still damp and glossy from her morning ablutions, was parted on her forehead by a wreath of wild-flowers twined from among those which grew around the spot; the contour of her figure, and her unstudied attitude of repose, realized the classic dreams of Nymph and Nereid, while her countenance were an expression of angelic loveliness, such as Reginald had never seen or imagined.

He gazed—and gazing on those sweet features, he saw the red full lips move unconsciously, while they followed the subject that absorbed her attention; and, forgetful that he was intruding on retirement, he waited, entranced, until those downcast eyes should be raised. At length she looked up, and seeing the figure of a man within a few paces of her, she sprung to her feet with the lightness of a startled antelope; and darting on him a look of mingled surprise and reproof, suppressed the exclamation of alarm that rose to her lips. Reginald would fain have addressed the lovely being before him—he would fain have excused his unintended intrusion; but the words died upon his lips, and it was almost mechanically that he doffed his hunting-cap, and stood silent and uncovered before her! Recovering from the momentary confusion, she advanced a step toward him, and with an ingenuous blush held out her hand, saying in a gentle tone of inquiry, and with the purest accent, “Netis, my brother's friend?”

“The same, fair creature,” replied Reginald, whose wonder and admiration were still more excited by the untaught grace and dignity of her manner, as well as by hearing his own tongue so sweetly pronounced: “but in the name of Heaven, who—what—can you be?” Blushing more deeply at the animation and earnestness of his manner, she was for a moment silent; when he continued, striking his head on his forehead:—“Oh! I have it. You are ‘Forest-Bird,’ the sister of whom Wingemund has told me so much.” Then, gently pressing the little hand which he had taken, he added, “Dear



Wingenund ! he saved my life ; his sister will not consider me a stranger."

Again a warmer blush mantled the cheek of Forest-Bird, as she replied, " You are no stranger ; you speak of Wingenund's good deed—you are silent about your own ! You drew War-Eagle from the deep and swift waters. I have heard it all, and have often wished to see you and thank you myself." There was a modest simplicity in her manner as she uttered these few words, that confirmed the impression made on Reginald by the first glimpse of her lovely form and features ; but beyond this there was something in the tone of her voice that found its way direct to his heart ; it fell upon his ears like an old familiar strain of music, and he felt unwilling to break the silence that followed its closing accents.

They were interrupted by the sound of footsteps and the voice of Black Father saying, in English :

" Come, my child, I have allowed you full time this morning ; we will return to the camp." As he spoke, his eye fell upon Reginald, and he added, courteously, " You have been early abroad, young sir."

" I have," replied Reginald. " I went to the top of yonder heights to see the sun rise, and was amply repaid by the beauty of the scene ; on my return, I wandered accidentally into this secluded spot, and trust that my intrusion is forgiven."

" I believe that my dear child and pupil would forgive a greater offense than that, in one who has shown so much kindness to her brothers," replied the missionary, smiling ; and he added, in a low voice, addressing the Forest-Bird in his own language, " indeed, my child, I think he deserves our friendly welcome ; for, unless his countenance strongly belies his character, it expresses all those good qualities which Wingenund taught us to expect."

" Stay, sir," said Reginald, coloring highly ; " let me not participate, without your knowledge, in your communications to Forest-Bird. I have travelled much in Germany, and the language is familiar to me."

" Then my young friend," said Paul Müller, taking his hand kindly, " you have only learnt, from what I said, how hard a task you will have to fulfill the expectations that Wingenund has led us to entertain."



"I can promise nothing," replied Reginald, glancing toward the maiden, "but a true tongue, a ready hand, and an honest heart; if these can serve my friend's sister, she may expect them without being disappointed."

The words in themselves were nothing remarkable, but the earnest feeling in the tone in which they were spoken made Forest-Bird's heart beat quicker; she answered him by a look, but said nothing. Wonderful is the expression, the magic eloquence of the human eye; and yet how is its power tenfold increased when the rays of its glance pass through the atmosphere even of dawning love. Reginald longed to know from whence she came and who she could be, this child of the wilderness, who had so suddenly, so irresistibly, engaged his feelings; above all, he longed to learn whether her heart and affections were free; and that single look, translated by the sanguine self-partiality of love, made him internally exclaim, "Her heart is not another's!" Whether this conjecture proved correct the after-course of this tale will show; meanwhile we can not forbear our admiration at the marvelous rapidity with which our hero, at his first interview with Forest-Bird, settled this point to his own satisfaction. The little party now strolled toward the camp; and as they went, Reginald, seeing that Forest Bird still held in her hand the book that he had seen her peruse with so much attention, said:

"May I inquire the subject of your studies this morning?"

"Certainly," she replied, with grave and sweet simplicity: "it is the subject of my study every morning: the book was given me by my dear father and instructor now by my side. I have much to thank him for; all I know, all I enjoy, almost all I feel, but most of all for this book, which has taught me to love, and in some degree to understand."

As she spoke she placed in Reginald's hand, a small copy of Luther's translation of the Bible. In the fly-leaf before the title-page was written: "Given to the Forest-Bird, by her loving father and instructor, Paul Müller." Reginald read this inscription half aloud, repeating to himself the words "Müller," "father," and coupling them with the strange enigmas formerly uttered by Wingenund respecting the origin of Forest-Bird, he was lost in conjecture as to their meaning.



"I see your difficulty," said the missionary; "you do not understand how she can call Wingenund and War-Eagle brothers, and me father. In truth, she has from her earliest childhood been brought up by Tamenund as his daughter, and as I reside chiefly with this Delaware band, I have made it my constant occupation and pleasure to give her such instruction as my humble means admit. She has been intrusted to us by the mysterious decrees of Providence; and though the blood of neither flows in her veins, Tamenund and I have, according to our respective offices, used our best endeavors to supply the place of natural parents."

"Dear, dear father," said Forest-Bird, pressing his hand to her lips, and looking up in his face with tearful eyes, "you are, and have been every thing to me—instructor, comforter, guide, and father! My Indian father, too, and my brothers, are all kind and loving to me. I have read in the books you have lent me many tales and histories of unkindness and hatred between parents and children in nations enlightened and civilized. I have had every wish gratified before expressed, and every comfort provided. What could a father have done for a child that you have not done for me?"

As she spoke she looked up in the missionary's face with a countenance so beaming with affection, that the old man pressed her in his arms, and kissing her forehead, muttered over her a blessing that he was too much moved to pronounce aloud; after a pause of a few minutes, he said to Reginald, with his usual benevolent smile: "We only know you yet by your Indian name of Netis—how are you called in the States? We inquired of War-Eagle and Wingenund, but they either did not remember, or could not pronounce your name."

"Reginald Brandon," replied our hero.

Forest-Bird started, and abruptly said: "Again, again; say it once more?"

Reginald repeated it, and she pronounced the first name after him.

"What are you thinking of, dear child?" asked the missionary.

"Nothing, dear father," she replied, with a faint smile; "we are now close to the camp, let us go in and rest awhile; perhaps you would like to talk more with Ne—I mean," she



added, hesitating, "with Reginald." So saying, and saluting them with that natural grace which belonged to all her movements, she withdrew toward the camp, and Reginald's eyes followed her retreating figure until it was lost behind the canvas folds that protected the opening to her tent, when he abruptly inquired of his companion, whether he knew any thing of the history and parentage of Forest-Bird.

"Not much," replied Paul Müller, smiling: "she was with this band of Delawares when I first came to reside among them: if any one knows her history, it must be Tamemund: but he keeps it a profound secret, and gives out among the tribe that she was sent to him by the Great Spirit, and that as long as she remains with the band they will be successful in hunting and in war."

"But how," inquired Reginald, "can he make such a tale pass current among a people who are well known to consider the female sex in so inferior and degraded a light?"

"He has effected it," replied the missionary, "partly by accident, partly by her extraordinary beauty and endowments, and partly, I must own, by my assistance, which I have given because I thereby insured to her the kindest and most respectful treatment, and also endeavored, under God's blessing, to make her instrumental in sowing the seed of His truth among these benighted savages."

"Let me understand this more in detail," said Reginald, "if the narration does not trouble you."

"Her first appearance among the Delawares, as they have told me," said the missionary, "was as follows: their prophet, or Great Medicine-man, dreamed that under a certain tree was deposited a treasure, that should enrich the tribe and render them fortunate: a party was sent by order of the chief to search the spot indicated; and on their arrival found a female child wrapped in a covering of beaver-skin, and reposing on a couch of turkey-feathers: these creatures being supposed to preside peculiarly over the fate of the Delawares, they brought back the child with great ceremony to the village, where they placed her under the care of the chief; set apart a tent or lodge for her own peculiar use; and ever since that time have continued to take care of her every comfort and safety.



“ My sacred office, and the kindly feelings entertained toward me by these Indians, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with Clitipa, or the ‘ Forest-Bird ;’ and I found in her such an amiable disposition, and so quick an apprehension, that I gave my best attention to the cultivation of talents which might, I hoped, some day produce a harvest of usefulness. In reading, writing and in music, she needed but little instruction. I furnished her from time to time with books, and paper, and pencil : an old Spanish guitar, probably taken from some of the dwellings of that people in Missouri, enabled her to practice simple melodies ; and you would be surprised at the sweetness with which she now sings words, strung together by herself in English and German, and also in the Delaware tongue, adapting them to wild airs, either such as she hears among the Indians or invents herself. I took especial pains to instruct her in the practical elements of a science that my long residence among the different tribes has rendered necessary and familiar to me—I mean that of medicine, as connected with the rude botany of the woods and prairies ; and so well has she profited by my instruction, and by her own persevering researches, that there is scarcely a tree, or gum, or herb, possessing any sanatory properties, which she does not know and apply to the relief of those around her.

“ Among other things, I enabled her to vaccinate most of the children in this band, by which means they escaped the fatal effects of a disorder that has committed dreadful ravages among the surrounding tribes : and I have instructed her in some of the elementary calculations of astronomy ; owing to which they look upon her as a superior being, commissioned by the Great Spirit to live among them, and to do them good : thus her person is safe, and her tent as sacred from intrusion as the Great Medicine-lodge. I am allowed to occupy a compartment in it, where I keep our little store of books and medicine ; and she goes about the camp on her errands of benevolence, followed by the attachment and veneration of all classes and ages !”

“ Happy existence !” exclaimed Reginald ; “ and yet,” added he, musing, “ she can not, surely, be doomed through life to waste such sweetness on an air so desert ?”



"I know not," answered the missionary. "God's purposes are mysterious, and the instruments that he chooses for effecting them various as the flowers on the prairie. Many an Indian warrior has that sweet child turned from the path of blood—more than one uplifted tomahawk has fallen harmless at the voice of her entreaty; nay, I have reason to hope, that in Wingenund, and in several others of the tribe, she has partially uprooted the weeds of hatred and revenge; and sown in their stead the seeds of gospel truth. Surely, Reginald Brandon, you would not call such an existence wasted!"

"That would I not, indeed," replied the young man, with emphasis. "It is an angel's office!" he added, inaudibly, "and it is performed by an angel!"

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## CHAPTER IX.

### MAHEGA'S LOVE.

THE succeeding morning dawned with unusual splendor; the sun gradually rose over the wooded hills that bounded the eastern horizon, and the light breeze shook the dewdrops from the flowers, as Forest-Bird, fresh and lovely as the scene around her, tripped lightly over the grass to the sequestered spot which we have before mentioned as being her favorite resort; there, seated at the root of the aged tree where Reginald had first seen her, she opened the volume which was her constant companion, and poured forth the grateful feelings of her heart, in the words of the inspired Prophet-King; at her feet flowed the brawling stream which fed the village below the encampment; the merry birds sung their matins among the leafy branches above her head, and around her sprung sweet-scented flowers and blossoms of a thousand varied hues.

Forest-Bird had enjoyed for some time her study and her meditations undisturbed, when her attention was caught by the sound of approaching footsteps; the conscious blood rushed to her cheek as she expected to see the same visitor who had so suddenly presented himself on the preceding day



when, to her surprise and annoyance, the gigantic figure of Mahéga stood before her, on the opposite side of the streamlet by which she was seated. Although simple, unsuspecting, and fearless by nature, there was something in the countenance and bearing of this formidable chief that had always inspired her with mingled dislike and awe; she returned the haughty greeting of the Indian by a gentle inclination of her head, and then summoned composure enough to continue her reading, as if desirous to avoid conversation. Such, however, was not Mahéga's intention, who, softening, as far as he was able, the rough tones of his voice, addressed to her, in the Delaware tongue, a string of the finest Indian compliments on her beauty and attractions. To these the maiden coldly replied by telling him that she thanked him for his good words; but that as she was studying the commands of the Great Spirit, she wished not to be disturbed.

Mahéga, nothing checked by this reply, continued to ply her with protestations and promises, and concluded by telling her that she *must* be his wife: that he was a warrior, and he would fill her wigwam with spoils and trophies. As he proceeded, his countenance became more excited, and the tones of his voice had already more of threat than of entreaty. Forest-Bird replied, with forced calmness, that she knew he was a great warrior, but that she could not be his wife; their paths were different; his led to war, and spoils, and power in ruling his tribe; hers to tending the sick and fulfilling the commands of the Great Spirit given in the Medicine Book."

Irritated by the firm though gentle tone of her reply, the violent passion of the chief broke out in a torrent of harsh and menacing words; he called her a foundling and a slave; adding, that in spite of the Delaware squaws and their white allies, she should sleep in his lodge, although the honor was greater than she deserved.

Fired with indignation at this brutal menace, the spirited girl rose from her seat, and, looking him full in the face, replied: "Forest-Bird is a foundling; if Mahéga knows his parents, he disgraces their name; she would rather be the slave of Tamenund than the wife of Mahéga."

A demoniac grin stole over the features of the savage, as he replied: "The words of Olitipa are bitter. Mahéga laughs



at her anger ; she is alone and unprotected ; will she walk to his lodge, or must the warrior carry her ?”

So saying, he advanced to the very edge of the narrow stream. The maiden, although alarmed, retained sufficient presence of mind to know that to save herself by flight was impossible ; but the courage of insulted virtue supported her, and she answered him in a tone that breathed more of indignation than of fear :

“ Olitipa is not alone—is not unprotected ! The Great Spirit is her protector, before whom the stature of Mahéga is as a blade of grass, and his strength like that of an infant. See,” she continued, drawing from her girdle a small, sharp-pointed dagger : “ Olitipa is not unprotected ; if Mahéga moves a foot to cross that stream, this knife shall reach her heart ; and the great Mahéga will go to the hunting-fields of the dead a coward, and a woman-slayer.”

As she spoke these words she held the dagger pointed to her bosom, now heaving with high emotion ; her form seemed to dilate, and her dark eye kindled with a prouder luster. The glow on her cheek, and the lofty dignity of her attitude, only heightened her beauty in the eyes of the savage, and confirmed him in carrying out his fell purpose, to secure the success of which he saw that stratagem, not force, must be employed ; assuming, therefore, a sarcastic tone of voice, he replied :

“ Olitipa trusts to the edge of her knife ; Mahéga laughs at her.” Then he continued, in a louder key, as if addressing an Indian behind her ; “ Let Wanemi seize her arm and hold it.”

As the surprised maiden turned her head in the direction where she expected to see the Indian to whom Mahéga was speaking, that crafty chief cleared the brook at a bound, and seizing her waist, while a smile of triumph lit up his features, said : “ The pretty one is Mahéga’s prisoner ; there is no one here but himself ; a cunning tale tickled the ears of Olitipa.”

The hapless girl saw how she had been outwitted by the savage ; she struggled in vain to free herself from his grasp, and a faint scream of despair broke from her lips.

The spring of a famished tiger on a heifer is not more fiercely impetuous than was the bound with which Reginald



Brandon rushed from an adjacent thicket upon Mahéga—reckless of his opponent's huge bulk and strength. The cry of Forest-Bird had strung with tenfold power every sinew in his athletic frame ; seizing with both his hands the throat of Mahéga, he grasped it with such deadly force that the Indian was compelled to release his hold of the maiden—but he still retained her knife, and in the struggle plunged it into the arm and shoulder of Reginald, who relaxed not, however, his iron grasp, but still bore his opponent backward, until the latter tripped over a projecting root, and he fell with tremendous force upon his head, the blood gushing in torrents from his nose and mouth. Reginald, who had been dragged down in his fall, seized the dagger, and, as he raised it above his head, felt a light touch upon his arm, and turning round, saw Forest-Bird kneeling at his side, her face pale as monumental marble, and the sacred volume still clasped in her hand.

“ Kill him not, Reginald,” she said, in a low, impressive voice ; “ Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord ! ”

Breathless, and flushed with the late severe struggle, the young man replied : “ I will spare the villain, dear Forest-Bird, at your bidding ; he is stunned and senseless now, but he will soon recover, and his fury and thirst for revenge will know no bounds ; he shall know, however, that I *have* spared him.”

So saying, he cut off the dyed and ornamental scalp-lock from the top of Mahéga's head, and, laying it beside the prostrate chieftain, arose, and retired with Forest-Bird from the spot.

They walked together some distance in silence, for her heart was overcharged with contending emotions ; and as they went, she unconsciously clung to his arm for support ; at length she stopped, and looking up in his face, her eyes glistening with tears, she said :

“ How am I ever to thank you ?—my first debt of gratitude is due to Heaven ; but you have been its brave, its blessed instrument of my deliverance from worse than death ! ” and a shudder passed over her frame as the rude grasp of Mahéga recurred to her remembrance.

“ Dear Forest-Bird,” he replied, “ as a man I would have done as much for the poorest and most indifferent of your sex ;



how then am I repaid a thousand, thousand fold by having been allowed to serve a being so precious?" The deep, mellow tone in which he spoke these words, and the look by which they were accompanied, brought the truant color again to the cheek of his companion, and as she cast her full, dark eyes downward, they rested on the arm that supported her, and she saw that his sleeve was stained and dripping with blood!

"Oh! you are wounded! badly hurt, I fear. Tell me, tell me, Reginald," she continued, with an intensity of anxiety that her expressive countenance betrayed, "are you badly hurt?"

"Indeed, dear Forest-Bird, I can not tell you: I felt the Indian strike me twice with the dagger before he fell; I do not think the wounds are serious, for you see I can walk and assist your steps too."

While he thus spoke, he was, however, growing faint from loss of blood, and the wound in his shoulder having become cold and stiff, gave him exquisite pain. Forest-Bird was not deceived by the cheerfulness of his manner; she saw the paleness that was gradually stealing over his countenance, and, with ready presence of mind, insisted on his sitting down on the trunk of a fallen tree beside the path they were pursuing. The suffering condition of Reginald redoubled instead of paralyzing her energies; she filled his cap with fresh water from the brook, urged him to taste a few drops, and sprinkled more over his face and temples; then ripping up the sleeve of his hunting-shirt, she found the blood still welling from two severe wounds between the elbow and shoulder in the left arm; these she bathed and carefully closed, applying to them a healing salve, which she drew from a small bag that she wore at her girdle, after which she bandaged the arm firmly with her kerchief; then, kneeling beside him, strove to read in his face the success of her simple surgery.

In the course of a few minutes the sensation of faintness, that had been produced by loss of blood, passed away, and the delighted Forest-Bird, seeing on his countenance the beam-  
ing smile of returning consciousness and strength, murmured to herself, "Oh, God, I thank thee!" then hiding her face in her hands, wept with mingled emotion and gratitude. Reginald heard the words, he marked the tears, and no longer able to repress the feelings with which his heart overflowed, he



drew her gently toward him with his yet unwounded arm, and whispered in her ear the outpourings of a first, fond, passionate love!

No reply came to her lips, her tears (tears of intense emotion) flowed yet faster; but a sensible pressure on the part of the little hand which he clasped within his own gave him the blest assurance that his love was returned; and again and again did he repeat those sacred and impassioned vows by which the hopes, the fears, the fortunes, the affections, the very existence of two immortal beings, are inseparably blended together. Her unresisting hand remained clasped in his, and her head leaned upon his shoulder, that she might conceal the blushes that suffused her countenance: still he would not be satisfied without a verbal answer to his thrice-urged prayer that he might call her his own; and when at length she raised her beaming eyes to his, and audibly whispered, "Forever," he sealed upon those sweet lips the contract of unchanged affection.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE BROTHER'S RIVAL.

WHEN Mahéga recovered his senses, he was still so much confused from the stunning effects of the severe blow that he had received on the head, as well as from loss of blood, that he could not recall to mind the events immediately preceding his swoon; nor did they present themselves distinctly to his memory, until his eye rested upon his stained scalp-lock, and beside it the knife that Reginald Brandon had driven firmly into the turf. Then he remembered clearly enough the struggle, his fall, and the maiden's escape; and the rage engendered by this remembrance was rendered yet more violent when he reflected on the insult that his scalp had sustained from an enemy who scorned to take his life.

Fierce as were the passions that boiled within the breast of the Osage, his self-command was such that he was able to control all outward demonstrations of them; and, rising



slowly, he first effaced in the stream all the sanguinary marks of the late contest, and then took his way toward the camp, revolving in his mind various projects for securing the two principal objects that he was determined to accomplish—the possession of Forest-Bird, and the death of Reginald Brandon!

Although a wild, uninstructed savage, Mahéga was gifted with talents of no common order. Bold, and inflexible in carrying out his purposes, he had cunning sufficient to make unimportant concessions to the opinions of other chiefs and braves in council: unlike the great majority of his tribe and race, he was well aware of the power and strength resulting from union, and although all his ambition ultimately centered in himself, he had the art of persuading his countrymen that he sought only their interests and welfare; thus while many hated, and more feared, Mahéga, he was the most influential chief in the tribe, on account of his daring courage, his success in war, and the reckless liberality with which he distributed among others his share of booty or of spoil. When the Delaware band had migrated to the banks of the Osage river, Mahéga's first impulse had been to attack and destroy them; but finding that the new-comers were better supplied with arms and ammunition, the issue of a conflict seemed doubtful. Moreover, as they were visited by many traders, he calculated that, by keeping on friendly terms with them, he should acquire for his tribe, and for himself, many advantages greater than they had before enjoyed.

Acting upon these motives, he had not only encouraged peace with the Delawares, but had effected through his own influence the league that had for some time united the two bands in one encampment; nor had he been mistaken in his expectations, for, since their union with the band of Delawares, the Osages had been enabled to beat off the Pawnees and other roving tribes, from whose inroads upon their hunting-ground they had before been exposed to frequent and severe disasters; the objects which he had contemplated had thus been for the most part accomplished. The tribe was plentifully supplied with arms and ammunition by the traders; his own influence among them was higher than ever; but he could not brook a rival to his fame as a war-



rior in War-Eagle, nor bear to be checked and thwarted in his ambitious schemes by the mild authority of Tame-nund.

The mind of Mahéga being thus prepared for seizing the earliest opportunity of coming to a rupture with the Delawares, it may well be imagined how his most violent and rancorous passions were excited by the scornful rejection of his suit on the part of Forest-Bird, and the disgrace he had incurred in his encounter with her white protector. He resolved no longer to delay the meditated blow; he had already made a secret league with the warlike and powerful Dahcotahs; and the occasion seemed most favorable for wreaking his vengeance on the relatives of Forest-Bird and the white men now resident in the Delaware camp.

Having once formed his determination, he set about carrying it into effect with the sagacity and profound dissimulation which had already obtained for him such an ascendancy in the Osage council. No sooner had he reached his lodge than he dressed himself in his Medicine-robe,\* adorned his face with corresponding streaks of paint, and concealing the loss of his scalp-lock by a Spanish kerchief which he folded round his head, somewhat after the fashion of a turban, he sallied forth to visit the chiefs and braves, on whose coöperation he felt that success mainly depended.

Toward the close of the day, Mahéga sent runners about his village, after the usual Indian fashion, to summon the warriors and braves, most of whom were prepared for the harangue which he was about to address to them; as soon as a sufficient number were collected, the wily chief came forth from his lodge, in the dress before described, and began by thanking them for so readily obeying his call.

"Why did Mahéga call the warriors?" he continued; "was it to tell them that a broad bison-trail is near the camp? The Medicine-men have not yet smoked the hunting-pipe to the Wahcondah.—Was it to tell them of the scalps taken by their

\* The buffalo-robcs worn by the Osages, as well as by some other western tribes, are variously ornamented and painted with devices. Some of these refer to war, some to marriage, some to medicine or mystery; these last are generally worn at councils, on which occasions a chief who has some important subject to propose frequently adds to the paint on his face some streaks corresponding to the devices on his buffalo-robe.



fathers? The young men have not been called to the war-dance, their ears have not heard the drum.\* Was it to tickle their ears with words like dried grass? Mahéga's tongue is not spread with honey; he has called the Washashe to open their ears and eyes, to tell them that snakes have crept under their lodges, that the dogs of the village have become wolves!"

Seeing that he had arrested their attention, he proceeded: "When Mahéga was young, when our fathers were warriors, who was so strong as the Washashe? Our hunters killed the deer and the bison from the Neska to the Topeoka.† The Kanzas were our brothers, and we were afraid of none. But the Mahe-hunguh‡ came near, their tongues were smooth, their hands were full, and the Washashe listened to their talk:— is it not so?"

"The Long knives smoked the pipe of peace with us, we gave them meat and skins, and they gave us paint and blankets, and fire-weapons with Medicine-powder and lead—all that was well; but who came with the Long-knives?—the Lenapé!" He paused a moment, then looking fiercely around, he continued in a louder strain; "and who are these Lenapé? They were beggars when they came to us! Their skin is red, but their hearts are pale. Do we not know the tale of their fathers? Were they not slaves to the warriors of other nations!§ Were they not women? Did they not leave the war-path to plant maize, and drink the fire-water of the Long-knives? They gave up their hunting-ground; they left the bones of their fathers: they crossed the Ne-o-hunge,|| and

\* In the performance of the war-dance among the Indians of the Missouri, the tread of the dancers is guided by a monotonous chant, sung by some of the Medicine-men, and accompanied by the beat of a small drum, of the rudest construction and most barren, dismal tone. It is generally nothing more than a dried skin, stretched upon a wooden frame hollowed out with a knife by the squaws.

† The Indian names for the rivers now called Kansas, and Osage, both of which fall into the Missouri.

‡ *Anglice*, Long-knives, or Americans.

§ Mahéga here alludes to that unfortunate era in the history of the Lenapé, so pathetically described by Heckewelder, when they permitted themselves to be persuaded by the whites to abandon all their warlike weapons and pursuits, and, following those of agriculture, to leave the affairs of war entirely to the northern tribes, who guaranteed their safety. The consequence was such as might have been expected; they were treated with contumely and injustice; and, being compelled at length to resume those arms to which they had been for some time unaccustomed, they suffered repeated defeats and disasters from the "six nations" and adjoining tribes.

|| The Mississippi is so called by the Osages.



asked for the friendship of the Washashes. We lighted the pipe for them; we received them like brothers, and opened to them our hunting-ground; but their hearts are bad to us, Washashes. Mahéga tells you that the Lenapé are snakes!"

A deep, guttural sound, indicative of great excitement, gratified the speaker's ear, and he continued in a strain yet bolder:

"Is Mahéga not a chief? Has he not struck the bodies of his enemies? Are there no scalps on his war-shirt? He was good to these Lenapé, he treated their warriors like brothers, he offered to make Olitipa his wife, they gave him bitter words and threw dirt upon his lodge. Shall the Washashe chief be called a dog?" he exclaimed in a voice of thunder; "shall he sit on the ground while a Lenapé spits in his face?"

A shout of anger and fury burst from the audience as, waving his hand impatiently for silence, he went on: "The Lenapé knew that their hearts were false, their arms weak, their tongues forked, and they have brought in a band of Long-knives to defend them and to drive the Washashe from their hunting-grounds. Shall it be so? Shall we hold our backs to be scourged like children? Shall we whine like starved wolves? See how the pale-faces can insult your chief!"

As he spoke, Mahéga tore the turban with one hand from his head, and holding up his severed scalp-lock with the other, while every muscle of his countenance worked with fury: "See what the hand of a white-face boy has done. Mahéga slept under a tree, and he whom they call Netis, the stranger who has eaten our meat and smoked with our chiefs, stole upon Mahéga, struck him on the head, and cut off his hair." As he uttered this audacious falsehood, which was, of course, believed by all who heard him, a terrific shout burst from the assembled Osages, and the wily chief, striking while the iron was hot, went on:

"It is enough—the Washashes are not women; they will dig up the hatchet, and throw it into the council lodge of these white-faced and pale-hearted dogs. The great chief of the Dahcotahs has spoken to Mahéga; he seeks the friendship of the Washashes; the Dahcotahs are men; the bisons on their hunting grounds are like the leaves in the forest. They wish



to call the Washashes brothers—they wait for Mahéga's words. What shall he say?"

A tremendous shout was raised in reply, a shout that could be heard throughout the whole encampment. Mahéga saw that his triumph was complete, and folding his Medicine-robe over his shoulder, he once more waved his hand for silence, and dismissed the assembly, saying: "Before the sun sinks again, the chiefs and braves will meet in council. The Washashes will hear their words, and they will be ready." As he spoke, he cast his dark eye expressively downward to the tomahawk suspended at his belt, and slowly reentered his lodge.

On the morning succeeding the events above related, War-Eagle left the encampment, partly to see whether he could discover any unusual stir among the Osages, and partly to revolve in his mind the course of conduct that he should suggest if called upon to give his opinion before the Lenapé council convoked to consider the action necessary in the rumored presence of a band of Dahcotahs, with whom Wingemund had learned the Osage chief was even then making a war treaty. The watchful eye of the youth had learned more than his lips confessed, as War-Eagle well knew, and to see for himself what danger was lurking near, he had started out on the trail.

Nor was his heart at ease. He had learned of the adventure of Reginald, and had witnessed Ojépa's tenderness toward her rescuer. Over and over again he asked himself the question: "Might not the brave pair, unconscious even to himself, win the love of the chief's foster-sister?" The thought was keenly painful.

Thinking thus, he was passing along the course of the streamlet, through the grove where the rencounter of the preceding day had occurred. When he reached the opening before described, his eyes rested on a spot that transfixed him to the spot. Seated on one of the projecting roots of the ancient tree was Forest-Bird, her eye and cheek glowing with happiness, and her ear drinking in the whispered vows of her newly betrothed lover; her hand was clasped in his, and more than once he pressed it tenderly to his lips. For several minutes the Indian stood silent and motionless as a statue;



despair seemed to have checked the current of his blood, but by slow degrees consciousness returned : he saw her, the maiden whom he had served, and with more than a brother's love, loved for weary months and years, now interchanging with another tokens of affection not to be mistaken, and that other a stranger whom he had himself lately brought by his own invitation from a distant region !

The demon of jealousy took instant possession of his soul ; every other thought, feeling and passion was for the time annihilated ; the nobler impulses of his nature were forgotten, and he was in a moment transformed into a merciless savage, bent on swift and deadly vengeance. He only paused as in doubt *how* he should kill his rival—perhaps, whether he should kill them both ; his eye dwelt upon them with a stern ferocity, as he loosened the unerring tomahawk from his belt ; another moment he paused, for his hand trembled convulsively, and a cold sweat stood like dew upon his brow. At this terrible crisis of his passion, a low voice whispered in his ear, in the Delaware tongue :

“ Would the Lenapé chief stain his medicine with a brother's blood ? ” War-Eagle, turning round, encountered the steady eye of Baptiste ; he gave no answer, but directed his fiery glance toward the spot where the unconscious lovers were seated, and the half-raised weapon still vibrated under the impulse of the internal struggle that shook every muscle of the Indian's frame. Profiting by the momentary pause, Baptiste continued, in the same tone : “ Shall the tomahawk of the War-Eagle strike an adopted son of the Unami ? \* The Bad Spirit has entered my brother's heart ; let him hold a talk with himself, and remember that he is the son of Tame-nund.”

By an effort of self-control, such as none but an Indian can exercise, War-Eagle subdued, instantaneously, all outward indication of the tempest that had been aroused in his breast. Replacing the tomahawk in his belt, he drew himself proudly

\* After their first meeting, in which Reginald had saved the life of War-Eagle, the latter had adopted his new friend, not only as a brother, but as a member of that portion of his tribe who were called Unami, and of which the turtle was the medicine or sacred symbol. After the ratification of such a covenant of brotherhood, each party is, according to Indian custom, solemnly bound to defend the other on all occasions, at the risk of his own life.



to his full light, and, fixing on the woodsman an eye calm and steady as his own, he replied :

“ Grande-Hache speaks truth ; War-Eagle is a chief ; the angry spirit is strong, but he tramples it under his feet.” He then added, in a lower tone : “ War-Eagle will speak to Netis ; not now ; if his white brother’s tongue has been forked, the medicine of the Unami shall not protect him. The sky is very black, and War-Eagle has no friend left.” So saying, the Indian threw his light blanket over his shoulder, and stalked gloomily from the spot.

Baptiste followed with his eye the retreating figure of the Delaware, muttering :

“ Well, I sometimes think the bears and the deer have more reason than human critters, ay, and I believe that shot isn’t overwide of the mark. Look at them two youngsters, Master Reginald and War-Eagle, two brave, honest hearts as ever lived ; one saves the other’s life ; they become brothers and swear friendship ; of a sudden I am obliged to step in between ’em, to prevent one from braining the other with a tomahawk. And what’s the cause of all this hate and fury ? Why, love—a pair of black eyes and red lips ; a strange kind of love, indeed, that makes a man hate and kill his best friend. Thank Heaven, I have nothing to do with such love ; and I say, as I said before, that the dumb animals have more reason than human critters. Well, I must do all I can to make ’em friends again, for a blind man might see they’ll need each other’s help ere many days are past !”

So saying, the woodsman threw his rifle into the hollow of his arm, and moved toward Reginald Brandon, who, unconscious of the danger that he had so narrowly escaped, was still engaged with Forest-Bird in that loving dialogue which finds no satiety in endless reiteration.

Baptiste drew near, and after the usual greetings, took an opportunity, as he thought unobserved by Forest-Bird, of making a sign to Reginald that he wished to speak with him in private ; but the maiden, watchful of every movement directly or indirectly affecting her lover, and already aware of the intrigues and treachery of the Ojages, said to him, with her usual simplicity of manner, “ Baptiste, if you have aught to say requiring my absence, I will go ; but as there are dan-



gers approaching that threaten us all alike, do not fear to speak before me. I know something of these people, and though only an unskilled maiden, my thoughts might be of some avail."

The sturdy hunter, although possessed of a shrewd judgment, was somewhat confused by this direct appeal; but after smoothing down the hair of his fur cap for a few moments, as was his custom when engaged in reflection, he resolved to speak before her without concealment; and he proceeded accordingly, with the blunt honesty of his nature, to narrate to them all the particulars of his late interview with War-Eagle. During his recital, both the auditors changed color more than once, with different yet sympathetic emotions; and when he concluded, Reginald suddenly arose, and, fixing his eye upon the maiden's countenance, as if he would read her soul, he said:

"Forest-Bird, I conjure you by all you love on earth, and by all your hopes of Heaven! tell me truly, if you have known and encouraged these feelings in War-Eagle?"

The dark eyes that had been cast to the ground with various painful emotions were raised at this appeal, and met her lover's searching look with the modest courage of conscious truth, as she replied:

"Reginald, is it possible that you can ask me such a question? Olitipa, the foundling of the Delawares, loved War-Eagle as she loved Wingenund; she was brought up in the same lodge with both; she called both, brothers; she thought of them only as such. Had War-Eagle ever asked for other love, she would have told him she had none other to give. She knew of none other, until—until—" The presence of a third person checked the words that struggled for utterance; her deep eyes filled with tears, and she hid them on Reginald's bosom.

"I were worse than an infidel could I doubt thy purity and truth," he exclaimed with fervor; "Baptiste, I will speak with my Indian brother—I pity him from my heart. I will strive all in my power to soothe his sorrow; for I, and I alone, can know what he must suffer, who has, in secret, and in vain, loved such a being as this!—Let us return."

Slowly and sadly they wended their way to the encamp-



ment, the guide bringing up the rear. He was thoroughly convinced that Forest-Bird had spoken the truth; every look, every accent carried conviction with it; but he feared for the meeting between the young men, being fully aware of the impetuosity of Reginald's character, and of the intense excitement that now affected the Indian's mind. He determined, however, to leave them to themselves for he had lived enough among men of stormy and ungoverned passions to know, that in a *tête-à-tête* between two high and generous spirits a concession will of en be made, to which pride might, in the presence of others, never have submitted.

On reaching their quarters in the encampment, they found Paul Muller standing thoughtfully before Forest-Bird's tent, into which, after exchanging a brief but cordial greeting, he and the maiden withdrew, leaving Reginald and the guide to retire into the adjoining lodge of Tamenund.

War-Eagle, who had posted himself in a spot whence, without being seen himself, he could observe their movements, now walked slowly forward to the entrance of the tent, into which he was immediately invited by the missionary: his manner was grave and composed, nor could the most observant eye have traced in the lines of his countenance the slightest shade of excitement or agitation.

After the usual salutation, he said, "War-Eagle will speak to the Black Father presently; he has now low words for the ear of only Olitipa."

Paul Muller, looking on him with a smile, benevolent though somewhat melancholy, said, "I shut my ears, my son and go, for I know that War Eagle will speak nothing that his sister should not hear;" and so saying, he retired into his adjacent compartment of the tent. Forest-Bird, conscious of the painful scene that awaited her, sat in embarrassed silence and for upward of a minute War-Eagle contemplated without speaking the sad but lovely expression of the maiden's countenance; that long and piercing look told him all that he dreaded to know; he saw that Bepiste had spoken to her; he saw that his hopes were blasted; and still his riveted gaze was fixed upon her, as the eyes of one banished for life dwell upon the last receding tints of the home that he is leaving forever. Collecting, at length, all the stoic firmness of his



nature, he spoke to her in the Delaware tongue ; the words that he used were few and simple, but in them, and in the tone of his voice, there was so much delicacy mingled with such depth of feeling, that Forest-Bird could not refrain from tears.

Answering him in the same language, she blended her accustomed sincerity of expression with gentle words of soothing kindness ; and, in concluding her reply, she took his hand in hers, saying, " Olitipa has long loved her brothers, War Eagle and Wingemund ; let not a cloud come between them now ; her heart is not changed to the great warrior of Lenapé ; his sister trusts to his protection ; she is proud of his fame ; she has no other love to give him ; her race, her religion, her heart forbid it ! but he is her dear brother ; he will not be angry, nor leave her.

" Mahéga and the Osages are become enemies ; the Dahcotah trail is near ; Tamenund is old and weak ; where shall Olitipa find a brother's love, and a brother's aid, if War-Eagle turns away his face from her now ?"

The noble heart to which she appealed had gone through its fiery ordeal of torture, and triumphed over it. After the manner of his tribe, the Delaware, before relinquishing her hand he pressed it for a moment to his breast, in token of affection, and said, " It is enough ; my sister's words are good, they are not spilt upon the ground ; let Mahéga or the Dahcotahs come near the lodge of Olitipa, and they shall learn that War Eagle is her brother !" The chieftain's hand rested lightly on his tomahawk, and his countenance, as he withdrew from the tent, wore an expression of high and stern resolve.



## CHAPTER XII.

## WAR TO THE KNIFE.

WAR EAGLE'S first step was to seek Reginald Brandon, whom he desired, by a silent signal, to leave the lodge and follow him. Our hero mechanically obeyed, in a painful state of excitement and agitation, feeling that he had been the unconscious means of blasting all the dearest hopes of his Indian friend; and although he had intended no injury, he was sensible that he had done on, such as man can rarely forgive, and can never repair; for even had the romantic generosity of friendship prompted him to resign all pretensions to Forest-Bird, he felt that such a resignation, while he was secure of her affections, would be mere mockery and insult. He knew also how prominent a feature is revenge in the Indian character, and thought it not improbable that he might be now following his conductor to some secluded spot, where their rivalry should be decided by mortal strife, and the survivor return to claim the lovely prize. This last thought, which would, under any other circumstances, have nerved his arm and made his heart exult within him, now overwhelmed him with sadness, for he loved both Wingemund and War-Eagle, they were endeared to him by reciprocal benefits, and he shrunk from a quarrel with the latter as from a fratricide.

Meanwhile the Indian strode rapidly forward; neither could Reginald detect the feelings that lurked beneath the dignified and unmoved composure of his countenance.

After walking in silence for some minutes, they reached a small hollow, where a few scattered alder-bushes screened them from the observation of stragglers round the skirts of the Delaware camp: here the chief suddenly halted, and turning toward Reginald, bent on him the full gaze of his dark and lustrous eyes; the latter observed with surprise that their expression, as well as that of his usually haughty features, was a deep, composed melancholy.



At length the Delaware broke the long and painful silence, addressing his companion, after his imperfect notion of English, in the following words :

“ The Great Spirit sent a cloud between Netis and War-Eagle—a very black cloud ; the lightning came from it and blinded the eyes of the Lenapé chief, so that he looked on his brother and thought he saw an enemy. The Bad Spirit whispered in his ear that the tongue of Netis was forked ; that the heart of Olitipa was false ; that she had listened to a mocking-bird, and had mingled for War-Eagle a cup of poison.”

The Delaware paused for a moment ; his eye retained its steady but sad expression, his lips were firmly compressed, and not a muscle betrayed the intensity of his feeling ; but Reginald appreciated rightly the self control that had conquered, in so severe a struggle, and grasping his friend's hand, he said :

“ Noble and generous son of the Lenapé, the Bad Spirit has no power over a heart like yours ! Are we not brothers ? Have not the waters of the Maskingum, and the treacherous knife of the Wyandot, tied our hearts together, so that no fear, no suspicion, no falsehood can come between them ? Netis believed that War-Eagle loved Olitipa only as a sister, or he would rather have given his scalp to Mahéga than have spoken soft words in the maiden's ear !”

“ My brother's words are true,” replied the Delaware, in the low and musical tone for which his voice was remarkable ; “ War-Eagle knows it ; he has dreamed, and is now awake : Olitipa is his sister—the Great Spirit decrees that no child of an Indian warrior shall call her mother. It is enough.” The countenance of the Delaware assumed a sterner expression as he continued :

“ My brother must be ready ; let his rifle be loaded and his eye open, for Tamenund has seen the snows of many winters ; the Black Father is good and true, but his hand knows not the tomahawk : the Osage panther will now crouch near the tent of Olitipa, and the feet of the Cat-throats\* will not be far ; before the sun goes down War-Eagle will see his brother again.”

\* The Sioux, or Dakotahs, are so designated by the Plains tribes.



Thus saying, and waiting no reply, he returned with hasty strides toward the village. Reginald gazed long and earnestly after the retreating figure of the Indian, forgetting awhile, in admiration of his heroic self-control, the dangers that, Baptiste had revealed to him, beset his beloved and his party.

Meanwhile the machinations of Mahéga, which had been conducted with his accustomed secrecy and cunning, were almost ripe for execution; several runners had interchanged communication between him and the Daheotah chief whose presence was now no secret to the Delawares; the Daheotah was delighted at the prospect, thus unexpectedly offered, of taking vengeance on his ancient and hated Lenapé foes. A secret council of the Osages had been held, at which a treaty with the Sioux and a rupture with the Delawares were discussed, and almost unanimously carried. Mahéga appearing rather to have coincided in the general determination than to have caused it by his influence and intrigues. The result of this council was, that the Osage village immediately struck their lodges, the horses were driven in, skins, provisions, and all their utensils were packed upon them, and in a few hours the whole body moved in a north-easterly direction toward the upper fork of the river Konzas, (now Kansas.)

It was while they were departing, that the Delaware council was summoned by a crier; Reginald and Baptiste were also invited to attend, the former in compliment to his station in the tribe as adopted brother of War-Eagle—the latter being recognized as a warrior of tried courage and experience. The chiefs and braves having seated themselves in a semicircle, the center of which was occupied by Tamenund, the Great Medicine pipe was first passed round in silence, and with the accustomed solemnities, after which Tamenund arose, and in a voice feeble from age, but distinctly audible, proceeded to explain to the assembly the affairs respecting which they had met to consult: while he was speaking, one of the Indians appointed to guard the entrance of the council-lodge, came in and announced a messenger from the Osage encampment. Tamenund paused, and desired the messenger to be introduced.

All eyes were bent sternly on the envoy, who advanced with a haughty and dignified step into the center of the lodge,



where he stood still, and resting on a long lance which he held in his right hand, awaited, according to Indian custom, a signal from the council-chief to deliver his errand. His dress, and the paint by which his body was adorned, had evidently been prepared with every attention to the niceties of Indian diplomacy, some portions of it being significant of peace or alliance, and others of hostile preparation; his right side was painted red, with streaks of black; on his left arm he wore a round shield of buffalo-hide, a quiver of arrows hung at his back, a tomahawk and knife were in his girdle, and in his left hand he carried a large string of wampum,\* adorned with ribbons and thongs of parti colored deer-skin.

The Delawares recognized in the messenger a young kinsman of Mahéga, one who had already distinguished himself by several feats of daring gallantry, and had been lately enrolled among the braves of his nation: he had hitherto been upon the most friendly terms with the Lenapé, was familiar with their language, and had volunteered on more than one occasion to follow War-Eagle on the war-path; but the lines of paint and his accouterments were now, as has before been observed, so carefully selected, that their practiced eyes were unable to decide whether peace or war was the object of his mission; neither was any inference to be drawn from his countenance or bearing, for, after the first cold salutation on entering, he leaned on his lance in an attitude of haughty indifference. Under these circumstances he was not invited to sit, neither was the pipe handed to him, but Tamenund briefly addressed him as follows:

“The messenger of Osage may speak. The ears of the Lenapé are open.”

“Flying-Arrow,” replied the young man, in a modest and quiet tone, “knows that many winters have passed over the head of the Lenapé chief; he is sorry to speak hard words to Tamenund.”

“Let the young warrior speak freely; Tamenund knows that he is the mouth of the Osage council,” was the grave reply.

\* Wampum, a corruption of the word “wampampea,” small shells strung together, and used by the Indians among themselves. A belt of wampum is the emblem of peace, as the hatchet or tomahawk is that of war.



“The Washashe say that the Lenapé have walked in a crooked path. The council have assembled; and the words delivered to Flying-Arrow are these: The Washashe allowed the Lenapé to kill meat on their hunting-ground, they smoked the pipe together, and gave each other the wampum-belt of peace; but the Lenapé hearts are white, though their skin is red; their tongues are smooth with telling many lies: they have brought the pale-faces here to aid them in driving the Washashe from the hunting-fields of their fathers! Is it not true?” continued the fearless envoy, in a louder strain; “they have done all they can to throw dirt upon the lodges of those whom they call brothers. When Mahéga offered to take the daughter of Tamenund as his wife, what was said to him? Does not the pale-face, who crept upon him and defiled his medicine, still sit and smoke at the Lenapé fire? Mahéga says, let Tamenund give him Olitipa for a wife, and the pale-face, called Netis, as a prisoner, and let him send back the other white men to the Great River; then Mahéga will believe that the hearts of the Lenapé are true to the friendship pledged on this belt.”

Thus saying, he shook the wampum before the assembled Delawares with an air of proud defiance. A brief pause followed this daring speech; the heart of War-Eagle boiled within him, but a scornful smile sat upon his haughty countenance, as he waited composedly for the reply of his father.

The latter fixing his eyes sternly upon the envoy thus addressed him: “Mahéga has filled the young brave’s mouth with lies. The hearts of the Lenapé are true as the guiding-star.\* They are faithful to their friends, they fear no enemies. Tamenund will not give Olitipa to Mahéga, nor his adopted son to be the Washashe’s prisoner. Tamenund is old, but he is not blind; Mahéga wishes to become a friend of the Dahcotahs. It is well; he will find among them hearts as bad and tongues as forked as his own! I have spoken.”

A deep murmur of approbation followed the aged chief’s brief but energetic harangue, and as soon as it was concluded, the fearless messenger drew a sharp knife from his girdle, and

\* The North Star is often alluded to by the Indian tribes, under this and other denominations.



severing the wampum-belt, he cast the two halves on the ground, saying: "It is well! thus is the league between the Washashe and the Lenapê divided."

Baptiste, to whom Reginald had again addressed a few words in a whisper, now rose, and, having requested permission of Tamemund, said to the Osage messenger: "Netis desires you to tell Mahêga that he is a liar—brave enough to frighten women, but nothing more. If he is a warrior let him come to-morrow at sunrise to the open Prairie, north of the camp; the friends of both shall stand back three arrow flights apart; Netis will meet him with a rifle and a hunting-knife; Olitipa will not be there to save his life again!"

Another murmur of approbation went round the assembly, many of them who had already heard of the rough treatment that the gigantic Osage had received at Reginald's hands; but hearing it now confirmed by the lips of a tried warrior, like Granle-Hache, they looked with increased respect and esteem on the adopted brother of War-Eagle.

"Flying Arrow will tell Mahêga," was the brief reply; and the messenger glanced his eye haughtily around the circle, left the lodge and returned to the encampment of his tribe. After his departure the council continued their deliberations for some time, and had not yet concluded them when a distant and repeated shouting attracted their attention, and a Delaware youth, of about fifteen years of age, rushed into the lodge, breathless and bleeding from a wound inflicted by an arrow, which had pierced his shoulder. A few hurried sentences explained to the chiefs the news of which he was the bearer. It appeared that he had been tending, in a bottom not far distant, a herd of horses, chiefly belonging to Tamemund, War-Eagle and the party of white men, when a band of mounted Sioux came sweeping down upon the valley at full speed; two or three young Delawares, who formed the out-picket on that side, had been taken completely by surprise, and paid with their lives the penalty of their carelessness.

The wounded youth who brought the intelligence had only escaped by his extreme swiftness of foot, and by the unwillingness of the enemy to approach too near the camp. Thus had the Dacotahs succeeded in carrying off, by a bold stroke,



upward of one hundred of the best horses from the Delaware village ; and Reginald soon learned, to his inexpressible annoyance and regret, that Nekimi was among the number of the captives. A hurried consultation followed, in which War Eagle, throwing off the modest reserve that he had practiced during the council, assumed his place as leader of the Lenapé braves, of whom he selected forty of the most active and daring, to accompany him on the difficult and dangerous expedition that was to be instantly undertaken for the recovery of the stolen horses.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE OSAGE'S TRIUMPH.

PAUL MÜLLER sat late at night in the tent of the Forest-Bird ; on the rude table lay the Bible from which he had been reading and explaining some difficulties that had perplexed her strong yet inquiring mind ; afterward they had turned the conversation to the scenes which had occurred within the last few days, and which were calculated to inspire serious anticipations of coming evil. Forest-Bird made no effort to conceal from her affectionate instructor how entirely her heart was given to Reginald ; she knew his bold and fearless disposition ; she knew too well the wily cunning of the powerful tribe against whom his expedition was undertaken, and more than one heavy sigh escaped her when she thought of the risks that he must incur.

The good missionary employed every possible argument to allay her fears, but none so effectively as that which referred to the protection of that Being who had been from childhood her hope, her trust and her shield, and, bidding her good-night, he had the pleasure of seeing her agitated spirit resume its usual composure.

Paul Müller returned to his tent, and throwing himself on a pile of buffalo skins, was soon fast asleep. He knew not how long he had slept, when he was aroused by a cry such as none who has once heard it can mistake or forget. Scarcely



had that shrill and savage whoop pierced the dull silence of the night, when every creature within the encampment sprung to their feet ; the braves and warriors, seizing their weapons, rushed to the quarter whence the cry proceeded, while the women and children, crowding round the aged and defenseless men, waited in suspense the result of the sudden and fierce attack. The noise and the tumult came from the northern quarter, that most remote from the lodges of Tamenund and Forest-Bird. Sixty of the chosen Osage warriors had fallen upon the small outpost placed to give the alarm, and, driving them easily before them and killing some, entered the camp almost simultaneously with the survivors. This band was led by that daring young warrior before introduced to the reader under the name of Flying-Arrow, who now burned with desire to render his name in the war-annals of his tribe, famous as that of his kinsman, Mahéga. Nor were the Delaware warriors slow to meet the invaders, with a courage equal to their own ; the conflict was fierce and confused, for the moon was no longer up, and the pale stars were contending, in a cloudy sky, with the dim, gray hue that precedes the dawn of day, so that the dusky figures of the combatants were scarcely visible.

At this crisis Mahéga, who had succeeded in gaining, unperceived, the valley to the southward of the Delaware camp, fell upon their rear with his reserve of forty men ; overthrowing all who opposed him, he forced his way toward the white tent, which the advancing light of dawn rendered now easily distinguishable from the dark-colored lodges around it ; shouting his battle-cry with a voice like a trumpet, he rushed onward, caring not, apparently, for scalps or trophies, but determined on securing the prize for which he had already broken his faith, and imbrued his hands in the blood of allies who had done him no injury. A gallant band of Delawares surrounded their aged chief, whose trembling hand now grasped a tomahawk that had for twenty years reposed idly in his belt. Forest-Bird had sprung from her couch, and already joined in the brief, but earnest prayer, which Paul Müller breathed at her side ; he recognized the Osage war-cry, and divining the chief object of their terrible leader, he whispered solemnly to her :



“ My dear child, if I am soon taken from you, keep, nevertheless, your trust in God. I see that knife still in your girdle ; I know what you have once dared ; if it be the will of Heaven, you must be prepared patiently to endure pain, sorrow, confinement, or oppression ; remember, it is only as the last resource against dishonor that you may have recourse to it.”

Dropping on her knees before him, she covered his hands with kisses, saying :

“ Dear father, if we must be separated, bless, bless your grateful child.” -

The worthy missionary, albeit accustomed to resign himself entirely to the will of Heaven, could scarcely command himself sufficiently to utter aloud the blessing that he implored upon her head ; but the shouts and cries of the combatants were every moment approaching nearer, and seizing his staff he went to the aperture in front of the lodge, in order to ascertain how the tide of conflict was turning.

The first object that met his view was the aged Tamenund, who had fallen in his hurried endeavor to rush to the combat, but was now partly supported and partly detained by his wailing wives and daughters, while the tomahawk that had dropped from his nerveless arm lay upon the ground beside him. As soon as he saw Paul Müller, he called him, and said, in a low voice :

“ The breath of Tamenund is going ; he has lived long enough ; the voices of his fathers are calling to him from the far hunting fields ; he will go, and pray the Great Spirit to give the scalps of these snake-tongued Washashe to the knife of War-Eagle.” After a moment’s pause, the old man continued : “ I know that the heart of the Black Father is good to the Lenapé ; he has been a friend of many days to the lodge of Tamenund ; he must be a father to Olutpa ; see is a sweet-scented flower ; the Great Spirit has given rain and sunshine to nourish its growth, and its roots are deep in Tamenund’s heart ; the Black Father will not allow it to be trodden under the feet of Mahéga.” While saying these words he drew from under his blanket a small leathern bag, the neck of which was carefully closed with ligaments of deer sinew that had been dipped in wax, or some similarly adhesive substance. “ This,” he added, “ is the medicine-bag of



Olitipa ; the Black Father must keep it when Tamenund is gone, and, while it is safe, the steps of the Bad Spirit will not draw near her."

The missionary took the bag, and concealed it immediately under his vest, but, before he had time to reply to his aged friend, a terrific cry announced that the Osages had succeeded in breaking through the Delaware ranks, and a fearful scene of confusion, plunder, and massacre ensued. The faithful missionary hastened to the side of his trembling pupil, resolved to die in defending her from injury, while the air was rent by the shouts of the victors, and the yells and shrieks of those suffering under their relentless fury.

Mike Smith and his men plied their weapons with determined courage and resolution, and several of the Osages paid with their lives the forfeit of their daring attack ; still the survivors pressed forward, bearing back the white men by force of numbers, and allowing not a moment for the reloading of the fire-arms. The voice of Mahéga rose high above the surrounding din, and all seemed to shrink from the terrible weapon which he wielded as if it had been a light cane or small-sword ; it was a short bludgeon, headed with a solid ball of iron, from which protruded several sharp iron spikes, already red with human blood. Mike Smith came boldly forward to meet him, holding in his left hand a discharged horse-pistol, and in his right a heavy cutlass, with which last he made a furious cut at the advancing Osage. The wary chief neither received nor parried it, but, springing lightly aside, seized the same moment for driving his heavy mace full on the unguarded forehead of his opponent, and the unfortunate woodsman dropped like an ox felled at the shambles ; the fierce Indian leaping forward, passed his knife twice through the prostrate body, and tearing off the scalp, waved the bloody trophy over his head.

Disheartened by the fall of their brave and powerful companion, the remaining white men offered but a feeble resistance, and the Osage chief rushed onward to the spot where only some wounded Delawares and a few devoted and half-armed youths were gathered around the aged Tamenund, determined to die at his side.

The old man received his death-blow with a composed



dignity worthy of his race, and his followers met their fate with equal heroism, neither expecting nor receiving mercy.

The victory was now complete, and both the scattered Delawares and the remaining white men fled for shelter and safety to the nearest points in the dense line of forest; few, if any, would have reached it, had not the war-pipe of Mahéga called his warriors around him. The fierce Osage, counting over his followers, found that fifteen were killed or mortally wounded; but the loss on the part of their opponents was much heavier, without reckoning upward of a score prisoners whose hands and legs were tightly fastened with bands of withy and elm-bark.

Mahéga, putting his head into the aperture of the tent, ordered Paul Müller to come forth.

"Resistance is unavailing," whispered the missionary to the weeping girl; "it will be harder with thee if I obey not this cruel man. Practice now, dear child, the lessons that we have so often read together, and leave the issue to Him who has promised never to forsake those who trust in Him."

So saying, he kissed her forehead, and gently disengaging himself from the hand that still clung to his garment, he went forth from the tent, and stood before Mahéga.

That wily chief was well aware that both the missionary and his fair pupil had many warm friends among his own tribe; there was in fact scarcely a family among them that had not experienced from one, or both, some act of charity or kindness; he had resolved therefore to treat them without severity, and while he assured himself of the person of Olitipa, to send her instructor to some distant spot, where neither his advice nor his reproofs were to be feared; with this determination he addressed him briefly, as follows:

"The Black Father will travel with my young men toward the east; he is no longer wanted here; he may seek the lodges of the Lenapé squaws beyond the Great River; he may advise them to remain where they are, to dig and grow corn, and not to come near the hunting-fields of the Washashe. My young men will travel three days with him; they may meet strangers—if he is silent, his life is safe; if he speaks, their tomahawk drinks his blood; when they have left him, his tongue and his feet are free. I have spoken."



Mahéga added a few words in a lower tone to the young warrior who was to execute his orders, and who, with two others, now stood by his prisoner; there was a lowering frown on the brow of the chief, and a deep meaning in his tone, showing plainly that there would be danger in disobeying the letter of those commands.

Paul Müller, advancing a few steps, addressed the chief in the Delaware tongue, with which he knew him to be familiar: "Mahéga is a great chief, and the Black Father is weak, and must obey him; before he goes he will speak some words which the chief must lock up in his heart. He loves Olitipa; he wishes to make her his wife; it may be, after a season, that she may look kindly upon him; but she is not like other maidens; she is under the care of the Great Spirit. Mahéga is strong, but her Medicine is stronger. She can hide the moon behind a cloud, and gather the fire of the sun as the daughters of the Washashe gather the river-waters in a vessel; let the chief remember the Black Father's last words. If Mahéga protects Olitipa and what belongs to her in the tent, it may be better for him when the Great Spirit is angry; if he offers her harm or insult, he will die like a dog, and wolves will pick his bones."

The missionary delivered this warning with a dignity and solemnity so earnest, that the eye of the fierce but superstitious savage quailed before him; and pleased to mark the effect of his words, Paul Müller turned and left the spot, muttering in his own tongue to himself, "God will doubtless forgive my endeavor to protect, through this artifice, a forlorn and friendless maiden, left in the hands of a man so cruel and unscrupulous."

In a few minutes the good missionary had completed the slight preparation requisite for his journey, and, accompanied by his Indian escort, left the ruined and despoiled village with a heavy heart.

Soon to appear, "WINGENUND; OR, THE DEATH OF WAR-EAGLE," by the author of "THE WHITE BRAVE."

THE END



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